

THE
MILITARY ARGUMENTS,
IN THE
LETTER
TO A

Right Honourable AUTHOR,
FULLY CONSIDERED,

By an OFFICER.

L O N D O N :

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Military Arguments, &c. considered.

I THOUGHT I had done reading and almost thinking on the subject of the late Expedition, when the letter *to a supposed Right Honourable Author* fell into my hands: the novelty of seeing a difficult military question *fully stated and considered by a Country Gentleman*, revived my curiosity; but I soon found, by the smartness of the style, and the fallacious subtlety of the argument, that it was rather the work of some eleve of the courts, now perhaps acting as a sort of second or third rate Minister; and that there was as much reality in the character of the author as of the person addressed to; and as much truth in both as in many of the positive assertions contained in it.

I could not however lay it aside: What at first was mere curiosity, turned into astonishment at the uncommon malignity and falshood of this work. And though I felt as little care or interest as possible from what quarter it came, I felt too much for the characters of the gentlemen so shamefully calumniated, to let the world be any longer imposed upon by that heap of false facts, false reasonings, and false constructions, that are the chief ingredients of this curious composition: not that I intend to follow the author through all that medley of party, political, ministerial, and naval considerations, with which his piece is en-

riched : But as I write neither for, or against any party, or any person that either *is* or *has been a Minister*, shall content myself with treating this matter in its proper light, as a military subject only ; by stating facts as they past, with all the plainness and firmness of a soldier and a friend to truth, and without considering whom I may please or displease.

I have from the first observed all the transactions of this extraordinary enterprize with attention. I have endeavoured to obtain the best information I could, of every material circumstance relative to it ; and though I wish well to the gentlemen who had the conduct of this Expedition (so far I will own *my prejudice* too) I am not surprized at the ill temper shewn by our people in general on its failure. I do not even condemn it, they have had disappointments enough to sour them : the service proposed was important ; the idea of it was dazzling ; they had been taught to expect success from all the measures of the Minister who has declared himself the author of this ; and I only wish, and very sincerely wish, this may be their last disappointment.

But though I can forgive their prejudices, I cannot look with less horror at the shameful arts used to foment them ; nor can I humour them at the expence of truth, or of those characters which, to the best of my judgment, have been most wickedly and unjustly aspersed.

I shall not however enter into the detail of all the little motives I think I see operating upon this occasion ; and as it is by facts, and not by words, I mean to vindicate those characters, I shall directly enter into the consideration of them, and leave to those who have more leisure or inclination the management of such controversies, as rather tend
to

to encrease, than allay, those heats which I most heartily lament.

I shall therefore from this moment no longer consider by whom this project was framed, by whom it was approved, or disapproved, or *to whom it was communicated*.

The author's example has given me sufficient distate to such considerations; as I think there cannot be a stronger instance of disingenuity and malevolence than in his reflexions on that head, particularly in the following one: Pag. 8. "That
" a plan approved and recommended by his R.
" H. the Duke would not have so shamefully
" failed without any attempt to execute it."—
By which a set of gentlemen of distinguished loyalty and affection to his Majesty and this government, and even by a sort of implication the great person himself whose name is so wantonly and so indecently introduced, are charged, without the least colour of fact or reason, as traitors and enemies to their country: for what is insinuated, is too plain to need a comment. The interest and honour of this nation, we are to understand, were sacrificed by these gentlemen, in order to gratify the resentment of a great person, *who had not been consulted*; their own honour was not less abandoned, and all this even before they could possibly know how gratefully this unnatural sacrifice would be accepted!

But let the author recollect that he *has owned himself prejudiced*, p. 9. And let him in his cooler hours, when they return, reflect with horror upon the effect of that prejudice which carries him thus to give up all truth, honesty, and even that common sense he so often appeals to, in his unjust representations of men and things.—To these reflexions I shall leave him, as I think to state this

calumny is to confute it; and have to a good an opinion of my countrymen to imagine I need even warn them not to be abused by so gross an attempt to impose on their understandings. From this earnest too I would have them convinced in what spirit this piece is composed, and what ingenuity, candor, and veracity, are to be expected from the prosecution of the work.

I had no thoughts of attacking the board of Enquiry, I have none now of casting any reflexion upon the individuals who composed it, or of disputing with the author their acknowledged merit; but as he very artfully undertakes its defence, that he may the more freely spit out his venom under the sanction of its report, I shall freely, but yet very candidly, give my opinion on the constitution of that board, not only as it regards the cause of the General Officers in question, but as a matter in which I really think that of the whole army essentially interested.

For as this board differed in its constitution, powers, and method of proceeding, from every other of the kind that I believe was ever yet established; so I cannot but think it the most irregular in its form, the most dangerous in its nature, and the most contrary to all the known and settled rules of justice; a court (if so it might be called) which without a formal power to condemn and unable sufficiently to acquit, could pass a sentence little less than capital, by taking away the character of officers under circumstances, where both the civil and military laws of their country would give them protection.

A court constituted of persons chosen by the Crown, or its Ministers, without any regular rotation in the service; from whence alone it is easy to guess what use might be made of it on occasion:
suppose

suppose a Commander were obnoxious to a Minister ; suppose him connected with those of an opposite party ; suppose the honour of a Minister and his schemes depended upon the condemnation of the Officer who had not executed them. I am, however, far from insinuating this was the case at present, and do really think the rank and character of those made choice of much above such a suspicion. To speak *ad hominem* too, as the author says, and in the phrase of party (though it is a language *I do not delight to talk*) I think their *connexions* do in general by no means favour such a suspicion ; but I represent against a precedent (*whoever began it*) which, if followed, will, I think, in worse times prove ruinous to the army and its liberty ; and how nearly an enslaved army is generally the forerunner of an enslaved people, I need not remark.

The manner of proceeding without any charge given, or any indictment laid ; the public invitation *for all persons that pleased to come and bring accusation*, for which a sort of proclamation was made by the Judge Advocate ; the public examination of the same witnesses on their parole, who were afterwards to be examined on oath in the same cause : all these were not less contrary to the established course of justice than the arbitrary appointment of the judges.

The very small number of those appointed must also be in its nature extremely liable to objection. There must be thirteen Judges to take away an Officer's commission ; he may be deprived of his character by three : which in the present case, were it not for the consideration and figure of the persons themselves, I should say was scarce decent, as *three* gentlemen only were to consider and have in effect past a very severe judgment on the opinion

of *eight* given in a General Council of War on the spot : of those eight it may be observed, without offence, that four were in another branch of the service, high and respected in it, and three more were in military rank equal, and in service and experience certainly not inferior to their Judges ; had not been less in action, had not distinguished themselves less, and have in the course of that service never had any imputation thrown on their conduct.

I do not, however, mean to lay any blame on the intentions of this board. I do think I have a right to appeal from their decision ; especially since the determination of another more regular, more solemn, and more legal court.

Having said thus much of the establishment of this board ; I cannot but remark one instance among many of the candor and veracity of our author in the reason given p. 13. as a principal one for establishing this enquiry, which is as follows :

“ But if ever such an Enquiry was right and
 “ proper, it was so in the present case, *where the*
 “ *parties to be tried had agreed upon a total sup-*
 “ *pression of evidence.* For in the very Council of
 “ War *which unanimously resolved to do nothing,* far
 “ from a desire to state the evidence on which
 “ they proceeded, and their respective opinions
 “ upon that evidence, which one would think na-
 “ tural for every one who was solicitous for his
 “ honour and justification, *the first thing resolved*
 “ *on was to take no minutes of opinions,* and *that*
 “ *even the informations of the persons examined*
 “ *should not stand part of the minutes so as to be*
 “ *transmitted to any person :* Enq. p. 10.—Here
 “ *then, as far as in them lay, was a total suppression*
 “ *of evidence.*”

Will

Will the reader now believe me when I say, there is not a single word of truth in this whole paragraph, nor in any one of the assertions contained in it? or will he convince himself by looking into the *Enq.* p. 10. referred to by the author, and into the *Appendix*, p. 104?—In the former he will find that all the evidence there stated on the rejecting of minutes relates *to the second*, and not to the *first Council of War*; not to *that council which*, as the author tells us, *Unanimously resolved to do nothing*, but to that *which unanimously resolved to land*. In the latter, *Enq.* p. 104. he will find the first Council of War at length, containing in the body of it *those very minutes, evidence, and informations*, which the author positively tells us *were suppressed*.

But he will say, it was only an *innocent mistake* of one Council of War for the other: a *slight inaccuracy* to be sure, when the failure of the Expedition is in a manner laid upon the resolution of that very Council of War, and when eight gentlemen of rank and character are accused as *neglectful of their honour*, and as being *suppressors of truth and evidence*, which the author will allow with me is the next shame to that of being *an asserter of falsehoods*.

He next accuses one of the Generals for advancing so strange a doctrine as, that he did not conceive himself answerable for an opinion given at a Council of War: and says, *He is sorry to find this doctrine so much received among officers* (p. 13.) and afterwards, *God forbid that such a doctrine should be established!* &c. Yet does he himself do that doctrine the honour to countenance it, where he says, p. 13. *That criminally responsible for his opinion no officer can be*. So far, I believe, that point is quite agreed; *criminally responsible* is
the

the very thing insisted upon, the very term used by one of the General Officers, *Enq. p. 36.* and all that, I believe, any officer is desirous to establish; for as to his *Majesty's power of judging who are fit to continue in his service*, into which the author seems at last to resolve his proposition, it was never disputed upon this or any other occasion; though to strip a gentleman of his commission for an opinion given where he was bound by his duty as a soldier to attend and give it, would be an exercise of prerogative not of the most humane or justifiable kind: it is possible his Majesty may have been advised, not long ago, to such an exercise of it.

For as the Crown has certainly the power, as the author says, though perhaps not the right, to punish men for their opinions; so have ministers the power, the author may possibly think they have the right too, if it suits their purpose, to misrepresent the conduct of his Majesty's most faithful servants to their sovereign, who is more to be pitied than blamed, if he acts in consequence of such representation.

I now come to those preliminaries which the author settles as the ground-work on which his approbation of the plan, and his censure on the non-execution of it, seem principally to rest; the first regards the intelligence relative to the defenceless state of the coast, and the small number of troops stationed there.

In respect to which I must be fair enough to own, I have not seen any good accounts of the regular troops of *France* that state them so high as the *Dutch* lists make them; nor can I, on the other hand, by any means agree with the author in his opinion of the accuracy of that memorial of the troops of *France* laid before the board of Enquiry, p. 69. of which he speaks with such confidence; much
less

less in his conclusion drawn from it of the defenceless state of *Rockfort*.

To me it appears so very imperfect, so full of guesses and suppositions, and at last leaves so many men (no less than 77,000) unaccounted for, that I am quite at a loss how to draw any conclusion at all from it in the present question; as, instead of a vague supposition, the greatest precision seemed necessary in estimating a garrison to be attacked by escalade, or surprize, with a body 7 or 8,000 men only; and where of course the difference of 2 or 3000 might be fatal to the expedition.

But as that Memorial is thus become one of the chief bases of this accusation, I shall think some minutes not ill employed in a more particular consideration of it.

It states as follows: That the regular troops in the pay of *France*, now consist of about 200,000 men: *viz.*

Before the present troubles	—	157,347
Augmentations since	—	38,420
		—————
		195,767
Or reckoning two regiments raised in the		
bishoprick of <i>Liege</i> , about	—	200,000

That of these 160,000 are employed in different services out of the kingdom, or for guarding the coast along the *Mediterranean*, &c. So that for the garrisons, &c. in the other parts of *France*, there remain only 40,000.

It farther sets forth, that of these 40,000, *about* 20,000 *are reckoned* to be from *St. Valleri* to *Berg*; and that there *is reason to think*, there cannot be above 10,000 from *St. Valleri* to *Bourdeaux*.

The whole of which reasoning amounts to this: That if the calculations there made are all just, and

and all the *suppositions* exactly true ; then it is *probable* there were not at the time the late Expedition was resolved upon above 10,000 men from *St. Valleri* in *Normandy* to *Bourdeaux*, exclusive of any proportion of the invalids, militia, &c. which amount by that Memorandum to no less than 67,000 ; besides which there also remain another 10,000 men out of the 40,000 not particularly disposed of ; so that the whole number of men, of whose cantooning there is no particular account or supposition, is 87,000 ; including those between *St. Valleri* and *Bourdeaux*.

Thus it stands upon the footing of that account. From whence a conclusion is drawn, that *Rochefort* must be left without a garrison sufficient to defend it against a *coup de main*, or escalade, as there were but 87,000 men, at whose destination the Ministry could not particularly guess.

But as it is fit such accounts should be exact where the difference of 2 or 3000 men must be fatal to the success of an expedition ; I think it will not be improper to give the several articles of the Memorandum a little farther examination.

The 1st article is, “ <i>Minorca, Corsica,</i>	
“ and the <i>American</i> colonies, take up at	
“ least — — — — —	25,000

But of these there is no particular state ; so that it is rather a guess than an account.

“ Marshal <i>d’Estree’s</i> army, if the regi-	
“ ments were compleat, would amount	
“ to about (<i>iroit, à</i>)	92,000

“ Embarked last spring for various	
“ services in the two <i>Indies</i> , about 3,000 or	4,000

If it was really that number, or about it, it may be asked whether these men so sent were all of the regular troops, whether

battalions

battalions or companies, or whether only drafts or recruits. Neither of which latter, being sent in the spring, would diminish the number of troops, as their place would certainly be supplied.

“ For guarding the places and posts
“ along the *Mediterranean* coast, about

6,000 or 7,000

“ It is reckoned that there are from

“ *St. Valleri* to *Berg*, about — 20,000

And lastly, “ That *there is reason to believe* that there cannot be from *St. Valleri*
to *Bordeaux* above — — 10,000

What that reason is, does not, I think, so plainly appear.

Now, as every one of the above articles are plainly nothing more than *guesses* at the number of men mentioned in them, it is natural to imagine, that a few thousand may easily be mistaken amidst so many suppositions, and in so large a number as 160,000 or 180,000; and consequently that the garrison of *Roche fort*, or state of the troops near it, cannot be determined by such an account.

But I have hitherto considered this matter upon the calculations of the Memorial only.

The true state of the *French Army at the Beginning of the present troubles*, from the ordonances of the King, settling the establishments after the the peace of *Aix*, and from the best calculations and authorities, I take to be as follows :

	Numb. of men.
<i>French</i> guards, six battalions	4,328
viz. Each battalion has five companies of fusiliers, of 126 each	3,780

Three

(14)

Brought over	—	3,780	4,328
Three companies of grenadiers to the whole, of 110 each	-	338	
Officers	-	212	
		4,328	
<i>Swiss</i> guards, four battalions	—		2,400
<i>viz.</i> Each battalion has three companies of 200 each, of- ficers included	—	600	
Tot. four battalions	—	2,400	
<i>French</i> infantry, as settled by ordonance the 10th Feb. 1749, 168 battallions	-	93,392	
<i>viz.</i> 12 regiments of 4 batta- lions, officers included, 2,220 each	—	26,640	
52 regiments of 2 battalions, 112 each	—	57,824	
16 regiments of 1 battalion, 558 each	—	8,928	
		93,392	
Grenadiers <i>de France</i> , 4 batalions	—		2,338
Consisting of 12 companies in each battallion	—		
Tot. regim. 1 Inspect. Comm. 16 Colon. 8 Lieut. Col. 1 Major, 4 Adjud. 48 Captains, 48 Lieut. 48 second Lieut. 96 Serjeants, 144 Corporals, 144 Anspeffades, 1728 Grenad. and 48 Drummers,			
Total	—	2,338	
Royal regiment of artillery, 5 bat- talions	—		4371

(15)

Brought over

106,829

viz. Each battalion 10 companies
of 72 — —

720

Total 5 battalions
Miners and workmen
Officers —

3600

506

251

4371

19 *German* battalions —

Each batt. at 600 —

12,201

11,400

Tot. officers in 19 battalions

801

12,201

9 *Swiss* regim. of 3 battalions each,
= 27 battalions

12,978

viz. Each battalion has 4 comp.
of 120. = 480 per battal. officers
included.

Tot. 27 battalions — —

12,960

Etat Major, &c. — —

18

12,978

Six *Irish* battalions of 496 each, of-
ficers included —

2,976

Two *Scotch* battalions at ditto —

992

Two *Italian* battalions at 557 each,
officers included —

1,114

Total infantry —

137,099

Household cavalry, including the
gendarmarie —

3414

French cavalry, 121 squadrons, 4
troops each —

14,872

Foreign ditto, 8 squadrons

1056

Total cavalry

19,342

(16)

Brought over	156,332
Dragoons, 16 regiments of 12 troops each —	8,852
Huffars, 8 squadrons —	918
Light troops (as in the memorandum) — —	2158
	11,928
	168,360
Total troops in the memorandum, —	157,347
Difference	11,003

By this it appears there is a mistake in the memorandum of 11,003 men ; which being added to the Number of regular troops allowed by that account to remain in *France*, the whole remaining there will then be as follows :

On the <i>Mediterranean</i> coast about	7,000
Between <i>Bergue</i> and <i>St. Valleri</i> ,	
about — —	20,000
Between <i>St. Valleri</i> and <i>Bour-</i>	
<i>deaux</i> , about — —	10,000
Not particularly disposed of	10,000
Omitted in the account as above	11,003
Total	58,003

To these are to be added 145 companies of Invalids doing duty, which amount to	9,015
3 companies of guards omitted	282
Marines, as in time of peace, 100 companies of 52 each —	5,200
1 <i>Swiss</i> regiment ditto	950
	3 com-

Brought over	—	58,003
3 companies of bombardiers at the maritime places	159	
107 battalions of militia at 520, officers included	—	55,640
	— —	71,246
Total		129,249

These are exclusive of the companies of cadets, of all the invalids not regimented, of the *Mare-chaussées*, and many others, armed, and on the military establishment, amounting to seven or eight thousand men, and also of the *Militia Garde-côtes*, which are a distinct body from the 107 battalions of militia before mentioned.

These are very numerous, reckoned at 150 or 200,000 men; they are composed of both horse and foot, and have their officers appointed by commissions from the king; they were particularly instituted for the guard of the coast, and often encamped for that purpose, during the last war.

But I will call the whole of these troops 50,000, which added to the 129,162 before mentioned, makes 179,162. From which, if you deduct those suppos'd to be stationed as in the memorandum, viz. on the *Mediterranean* 7000, between *Bergues* and *St. Valleri* 20,000, in all 27,000.

There then remain 152,162 men, of whom the memorial has not even supposed any distribution, all or any part of whom, (for ought that appears in that paper) might be stationed at or near *Rockefort*, for its defence. But that out of 152,162 men, there cou'd not be assembled in a few days 2 or 3000 for its defence against a *Coup de Main*, to be attempted by 7 or 8000 only, requires an extraordinary degree of penetration to discover; yet such was the conclusion then drawn, and now in-

sisted on as an unexceptionable foundation for this expedition.

I do not pretend to have any accurate account of the augmentations made since the commencement of the present troubles ; and therefore take them upon the footing of the memorial, tho', as far as some private advices go, I have reason to think they are considerably higher than is there stated.

As to the arguments drawn from subsequent accounts of the troops on the coast, the march of the *French* guards, the tears of marsh. *Seneterre*, and an heap of such *Pontneuf Intelligence* ; they are so full of absurdity in themselves, and so totally contradicted by other accounts of at least equal authority, that it is impossible to lay any stress upon them :—If one master of a ship has said there were but four battalions in the neighbourhood, and but two in the town of *Rochefort* ; another has said, and was ready to have deposed in form, (if such evidence cou'd have been admitted) that at the very time our expedition was sent, there were ten or twelve thousand of the best troops of *France* in those very parts : Others have, since the affair was over, given accounts to the same effect ; as to Marshal *Seneterre's* crying, it is impossible to treat it seriously, and probably is about as true, that he wept at the approach of our Armada, as that a great minister *Broke his heart on its return*. If one cou'd be serious about it, I have seriously heard an account diametrically opposite of that gentleman's character and behaviour on this occasion : he served, as I am well informed, throughout the last war with reputation both in *Flanders* and *Germany*, had a remarkable vivacity of disposition ; and, as I am told by a gentleman who was personally acquainted with him, is the last man in *France* he shou'd think capable of crying on such an occasion.

I have also myself seen a letter from one of his M—'s ministers at a foreign court, which says, that, by his accounts from *Paris*, at the time when marshal *Seneterre's* first letters came there, he wrote to his court *in the greatest spirits*, said he had *troops enough for the defence of Rochefort*, and *that he would answer for the safety of the place with his head*.

As to the household troops, I can only say, that tho' it is possible such a measure may have been taken for the general security of so long a range of coast; yet I believe even the author will agree, it is *impossible* they should have set out on a march of 14 or 16 days from *Paris* to save *Rochefort* from a *Coup de Main*, which must have been decided in almost as few hours. If they were therefore really alarm'd for *Rochefort*, as is pretended, it was because they knew, what is on all hands acknowledged, that *Rochefort* is from its construction as weak against a regular attack, as I think it must be strong and defensible against a mere assault on the shortest preparation; it was because they expected *a siege*, and did not conceive it possible, that our ministry shou'd send out a grand armament 100 leagues to *surprize a town in the bottom of the bay of Biscay*.

I shou'd therefore not be at all shaken in my opinion, as to the success of our *Escalade*, even on admission of all the wildest stories we have heard on this head. I will suppose the household troops march'd; I will suppose the marshal cried, if you please; I will suppose there were but two battalions collected in *Rochefort*, after a long alarm on the coast, and 8 or 9 days certain notice from the actual appearance of our army there; and yet I will maintain, that with those two battalions, with the great number of dockmen in the yards, a vigorous

and hardy race of men ; with the marines, some of whom are constantly stationed there ; with the numerous inhabitants of the place, always used to arms, and garrison duty ; with a company of cadets, and another of bombardiers ; and with the crews of the ships then in the river, which alone, if compleat, amounted to near 3,000 men ; I will maintain, I say, that unless the whole were infected with the marshal's imaginary tears, there was a garrison much more than sufficient to make the place perfectly secure against *such an attack*.

But, after all, this subsequent intelligence is little to our purpose, as the conduct of the officers on the late expedition can certainly not be determined by any circumstances that were not before them : no court of justice wou'd admit of such evidence ; and I think the same tenderness and strict equity ought to be used in the trial of mens characters as of their persons. — This the author himself has discover'd at last, tho' not till the very postscript of his work ; where, after his invention, prejudice, and invective, had enjoyed their full scope thro' 67 pages ; after telling us of the *Reports* of 4,000 men only stationed from *Port l'Orient* to *Bourdeaux*, of marshal *Seneterre's* *passing his hours in tears*, &c. he is seiz'd with a sudden fit of candor, and tells us with a noble air of generous triumph, that *he scorn'd to avail himself of the intelligence lately brought from Rochelle, by a master of a transport, that he disdained to prejudice the mind of the reader by a testimony of this sort, and that he determined the conduct of the generals shou'd be judged of from the same evidence, on which they maybe supposed to act, but as an opinion is by that time form'd,* (which our candid country gentleman has indeed taken due pains to form) he thinks he may as well give the *Coup de Grace*, and from an excess of candor, keeps this

this story in reserve to leave a favourable impression on the mind of the reader.

In regard to the term of *Coup de Main*, and the interpretation to be given it, it is a dispute for grammarians, and not for soldiers. In fact, I do maintain, that both in the nature and intention of this enterprize, *Surprize* was the plan of it ; the refusal of a few more battalions, and a proper artillery to force the place ; the refusal to attempt getting newer or better intelligence of it, for fear of *discovering the secret*, tho' it lay venting itself for six weeks together, during the delay of the troops at the isle of *Wight* ; and more still, the nature of the attack (in the view of a mere assault) which made surprize *necessary* to its success ; all prov'd *That* to be the plan, and the only plan of the enterprize on its outset : I maintain also, that it gradually varied from that plan, and that the very idea of it was totally vanished at the time when the council of war sat on the 25th of *September* ; I don't speak of an actual perfect surprize only, where the march and attack are all included in the compass of a few hours, but of such a degree of surprize as shou'd afford, in all human appearance, any prospect of practicability in the attempt ; which I reckon would have been the case, if the troops had landed in 24 or 48 hours after their appearance on the coast ; whereas it was the 6th day since the appearance of the fleet, when the first council of war sat, and must have been the eighth or ninth before the escalade could have been made ; it was no longer time, then, for such an attempt ; the opportunity was gone : — It was not the same of any other mode of attack ; which made the weakness of confining the operation to that single idea.

The argument drawn from the article in Lord *Ligonier's* instructions, where he mentions, that it

MAY SUCCEED AFTER THE PLACE HAS *been thoroughly reconnoitred*, I think changes little in the state of this question ; as that reconnoitre, if thought proper, cou'd not take up much time.—It was still the same mode of attack.

As for the instances of *Bergen-op-zoom* and *St. Philips*, tho' it is allowed, that attacks of that kind may have succeeded in some particular cases without surprize ; yet are those cases very rare, and very unlike the present in almost every circumstance, being generally after the garrison has been tired and dispirited with a long siege, their defences ruined, their works long batter'd by a superior artillery, those attacks supported by large armies, and the plan of attack suddenly chang'd, (perhaps on intelligence that the guards were remiss, or ill posted, or of some treachery in the place, &c.) which constituted still a species of *Surprize*. This was remarkably the case at *Bergen-op zoom*, where the defence was so entirely neglected, that it was universally thought to be from treachery, and a design to let the place fall into the hands of the *French* ; yet, even here a breach, in some degree practicable, was made. The case of *St. Philips* was of the same kind in most respects ; except that the attack was there, I think, confined to some of the outworks, and no attempt made on the body of the place.

I have but one more, of what our author calls his outworks or preliminaries, to consider, and shall then come to my defence against his *attack in form*. It is his complaint against the land officers, or their advocate, p. 21, “ For having *forced into*
 “ *their service*, an argument drawn from the con-
 “ currence of the sea-officers to the resolution of the
 “ first council of war : ” yet nothing sure can be more natural than the compliment thereby paid to
 the

the judgment, as well as intentions, of the gentlemen in the sea-service. The question was not, as the author represents, a question merely for the *escalade of Rochefort*, that would have been properly determined by the land-officers only, after the landing was effected ; the question certainly was, whether it was proper *to land the troops at the place therein-mentioned, and under the circumstances therein described, in order afterwards to escalade Rochefort*, no other species of attack then offering itself ? This the whole tenor of that council of war so plainly evinces, that it is impossible a doubt shou'd remain about it, in the mind of any man who takes the trouble to read it over, as it stands verbatim in the *Enq. p. 104.*

Where in the beginning of it he will find,
 “ *That the first object was to determine, whether a*
 “ *proper landing-place could be found for landing the*
 “ *troops, and that a report made by the rear-admi-*
 “ *ral, &c. being produced,*

“ The council having taken the said report into
 “ consideration, and examined the pilots, &c.—it
 “ appears that there are but two landing places,
 “ and that the troops could not be reimbarked
 “ from either in bad weather, the swell of the sea
 “ making so great a surf on the shore, that no
 “ boats would be able to approach it to take off the
 “ troops ; the ablest pilot having informed the
 “ council, that he had been at anchor seven
 “ weeks in this road, and not a boat been able to
 “ pass or repass : and it likewise appears, that, in
 “ case the troops should be overpower'd by the
 “ enemy, they could have no protection from the
 “ ships, the shoal water preventing their coming
 “ within gun-shot.”

It then, in *the second place*, considers the nature of the attack on *Rochefort*, and concludes,

“ *All which* being taken into consideration, &c.
 “ — or consequently succeeding in an enterprize
 “ founded on the plan of an assault or escalade
 “ merely, *and the uncertainty of a secure retreat for*
 “ *the troops* if landed, the council are *unanimously*
 “ of opinion, that such an *attempt* is neither ad-
 “ viseable nor practicable.”

Thus it is plain to a demonstration, that the nature of the *landing place*, the *openness of the bay*, the *want of protection for the troops from the ships*, and *of security for their retreat*, were as much the objects of deliberation, as the *escalade of Rochefort*. The operation in question, therefore, consisted of two branches ; that of the landing and bringing off the troops on one hand, and the attack of the place on the other ; in the former of which, the sea-officers being the proper judges, as the land officers were in the other, it seem'd natural, and agreeable to his M's instructions, (which prescribe a joint council of war in that situation) that one general opinion shou'd be taken on the whole, which was done. So that, if the opinion of the sea-officers was founded in their acquiescence to that of the land-officers, as the author advances, I apprehend the land-officers might, with as much reason, ascribe their part in the determination to the opinion they had of the judgment and knowledge of the sea-officers ; as, in fact, that determination was principally form'd upon those considerations, which shew'd how extremely precarious *the retreat of the army* must be, from that state of the landing place ; as is explicitly declared by every one of those gentlemen who were members of that council. So that in both services, they seem to have acted *equally in compliance with his M's instructions to live in harmony with each other*.

I beg the reader's pardon for the dissultory and

unconnected method of argument I have hitherto pursued, in compliance with that of the gentleman whose steps I follow ; but as this skirmishing was but the prelude to his *attack in form*, which we are now come to, against That, as carried on with no less formidable an artillery than the very articles of the Report itself, I must endeavour to make a more methodical defence.

In which I shall attend him thro' the several articles, and his observations thereon, as regularly as I can ; without neglecting those *sallies of his pen*, which it would be an affront to leave quite unnoticed.

On the first article, which regards the attack of *Fouras* by sea, I shall give the reader very little trouble : that it was proposed by the land-officers, on the footing of a joint attack by sea and land, particularly in the plans proposed by M. G. *Conway* and by Col. *Wolfe*, for that purpose, appears from Sir *John Mordaunt's* evidence, *Enq p. 28.* — As also from his and Gen. *Conway's* narrative, and by Col. *Wolfe's* and Col. *Howard's* evidence at the board. So far at least the land-officers stand acquitted, as the author, I think, confesses : tho' in another place, he says, or insinuates, the land-officers would have taken no part of it. “ *If the fleet cou'd have taken Fouras, they were still at liberty to do it.* ” “ *Of the whole which was their department have they, or did they attempt a single part, &c. ?* ”

How far it was practicable to have come at it by sea, I shall no more than the board of General Officers pretend to determine ; what appears in evidence is, that the Vice-Admiral on the report of his Master and others whom he sent to sound ; and afterwards on trials made by himself, and by *Thirri* the pilot, with the bomb-ketches and *Conventry* frigate, judg'd it impracticable : but how far
the

the *position of the fort, and the wisdom of the French*, who the author cannot suppose built it to *guard a sand-bank* weigh against this evidence, the reader must judge; one thing is certain, that the guns of a fort can annoy ships at a distance much too great for ships to form the attack of a fort.

I come now to the second article of the report, which contains the principal charge against the Commander in Chief, and against the whole Council of War; enlarged upon and supported by the author with all the bitterness his imagination could suggest against the Land Officers particularly, and still more particularly against three of them, whom he has selected out of the eight who composed that Council as the destined objects of his rancour.

The 1st part is an accusation against the Commander in Chief Sir J. M. *for calling a Council of War instead of immediately ordering the troops to land.* But as the reason he had for taking that step are so strongly and clearly stated in his defence before the Court Martial, p. 50. that nothing can be added to them, to those I refer the reader; the rather as they were in a great measure the same which afterwards determined the Council of War in their Resolution, and which I shall be obliged to recapitulate on that account.

He says there, that he had a latitude given him to judge; and a council to assist him in judging: That he therefore acted agreeably to his Majesty's instructions by summoning that Council *in so important and difficult a case.*

“ That it could not be disobedience to doubt.

“ That it could not be disobedience to desire

“ assistance to clear up that doubt.”

But as this part of the accusation is not dwelt upon by the author, I shall proceed to those which follow,

follow, and which all relate to the resolution of the Council; not, as the author says, p. 36. *Their immediate resolution to go home again; or to lay aside all thoughts of prosecuting the whole plan*, as he says, p. 56.--But merely not to land under the particular circumstances, and for the particular end (that of the escalade) which were then alone before them.

For the resolution *to go home again*, which was proposed in that Council of War, *was over-ruled there*, as appears from General Conway's *Narrative, Enquiry*, p. 37. "But a question being then proposed for determining to come back to *England*,
 " I opposed it, as it was not in that view I gave
 " my assent to the former question; and thought
 " we should by all means see what farther could be
 " done, &c."

Thus it appears not only that the Council of War did not, *immediately resolve to go home again*, as is advanced, but did in effect *resolve the contrary*, by considering and rejecting a proposition stated for that purpose.

But as the grand question, *Why they did not actually resolve to land?* still remains to be cleared up, I must beg the reader's patience, while I endeavour to retrace in his mind those facts and those ideas which the author has exhausted all his logick and eloquence to obliterate.

First then it must be considered, upon what intelligence, and upon what plan, this Expedition was sent out.

2dly, What new intelligence, or what new circumstances, intervened to affect that plan previous to the Council of War of the 25th *September*.

And 3dly, What particular evidence appeared at that Council to induce them to come to that unanimous opinion which they gave.

As

As to the intelligence the government had received, it lies in a pretty short compass, and was in substance as follows.

Some time in the year 1754, an *English* officer (Captain, now Lieutenant *Cl—ke*) returning from *Gibraltar*, was led by his curiosity to *Rockefort*, where he staid a few days, and was, I think, allowed to walk, in company with a *French* engineer, twice round the works, which he *imagined* to be at that time so weak, that it would not be difficult to take the place by escalade or surprize.

The account he gave was in substance, That there was an opening in the rampart by the river-side; that the greatest part of the rampart was not regularly flanked; that there were no outworks, and that the ditch was imperfect; nay, that in some places there was no ditch at all. On the other hand, as he himself states, there was a large and high rampart of earth well faced with stone round the place; that rampart was every where flanked with redans (there were also some bastions, or half bastions) the ditch was wet good part of the way round on each side from the river; the opening he mentioned was in low, marshy ground by the river-side, already cut with muddy ditches, into which the tide flowed; and there were, when he was there, though in time of peace, 1,000 marines in garrison; he had taken no plan of the place; he did not know the height of the rampart; he did not know positively, whether there were draw-bridges before the gates; he could not account for the vast mass of earth that composed the rampart; which by his own guess, and by the account he took from an Old Geographical Dictionary, was not less than twenty or twenty-five feet high, and by all accounts thick enough to bear two rows of trees, and to be, I think, the chief
airing

airing of the town for coaches, and yet formed, as he says, in some places without *any ditch at all before it*. He knew nothing of the state of the place *since the year 1754, nor of the number of troops in garrison there, or stationed near it, and had no knowledge at all of the coast or landing, or the country leading to the place.*

Such was the evidence of Colonel Cl—ke, afterwards confirmed in some parts by *Jos. Thierri*, a French pilot, as may be seen in his deposition laid before the board of General Officers, *Enq.* p. 68. but with equal ignorance of the landing and coast, as also of the *present* state of the place, the garrison, and troops in the neighbourhood, he not having been *at the town for ten years past*. Which on the whole amounts to little more than this, That three years and an half ago, a town on the continent of France, had a *breach in its rampart in a low marshy spot, and its ditch not compleat all round*; though that circumstance was totally incredible as the immense quantity of solid earth, which composed its rampart, could no where be had so ready, so cheap, and so convenient as from the excavation of a ditch before it.

Such was the *only intelligence* received previous to the embarkation of the troops; except indeed that authentick account of the French King's forces furnished the Ministry by *their most confidential correspondent*, by which it appeared, as I have shewn, that there did not remain much above 150,000 men, who were not *imagined to be probably a great distance from Rochefort* at that time.

Having thus stated what was the intelligence, I shall next shew what was, as I apprehend, the nature of the plan on which this Expedition was sent out.

Which

Which, as appears by his Majesty's instructions to Sir *Edward Hawke* and Sir *John Mordaunt*, was in the first instance to *cause a diversion* in favour of his R. H. the Duke and the Electorate, at that time in the utmost danger of being overpowered by the vast superiority of the *French* forces. For the battles of *Rosbach* and *Lissa* not having been then fought, it was not expected as a thing of course, that 25 or 30,000 men were to beat 80 or 90,000; nor was it yet the system to complain, that a General, with 25,000 effective men in the field, did *no more than stand a battle*, and *almost gain a victory* against 70,000. For as the author says ironically, but very truly, p. 64. *There were certainly not so many men in the German as in the French army*: he might have added, by at least 50,000.

I say therefore, that in this light the measure was wise and solid; to draw back any part of the enemy's troops from *Germany*, or to prevent more from being sent there, was in that conjuncture of the utmost importance to the common cause, nothing was better calculated for this purpose than an alarm on the coasts of *France*; and if, in the course of that operation, any material stroke could be struck, that might essentially annoy the enemy, nobody can doubt of the propriety of making that attempt.

Such an one, I must be candid enough to own, was the attack of *Rockefort*; then the favourite, and since become the only object of this enterprise. But that the foundation on which it rested, or the particular mode pitched upon for the execution, did in any degree answer the wisdom of the design, I must, according to the best of my judgment, absolutely deny.

Because

Because our intelligence was very defective as I have shewn; and because we chose to attack a place on the footing of a surprize, which could scarce possibly be surprized, and, by our eagerness in that vain pursuit, neglected every mode of attack to which that place was by its situation, and by the state of its works, unalterably exposed.

The Admirals and Generals, it is said, strongly objected to the prudence of proceeding on this plan, and on this scanty intelligence; they asked for a few more battalions and an artillery fit to attack the place (Court Martial, p. 67.) knowing from its construction it could make little resistance against such an attack, probably not more than of a few days only, if the garrison was weak; it was also urged, that even then it did not seem too late to get some farther and *fresher* intelligence: to which it was answered, That no more battalions could be spared; that more artillery was unnecessary, *as the scheme was formed upon the footing of a Coup de Main, or surprize*, and not of a regular siege; and in regard to intelligence, it was not to be ventured, as the *least alarm must be fatal to the enterprize*; so that it was thought better to trust to chance *for the nature of the coast and landing, the present condition of the place, the state of the garrison, &c.* than attempt to get any better information *at the risque of the secret*.

Thus I think it is clear beyond a doubt, that whatever terms were used in the instructions of *forcing, vigorous impressions, warm alarms, burning and destroying, &c.* they do by no means prove, as the author is willing to conclude, that *surprize* was out of the question in any part of this operation, *surprendre une place de vive force; to surprize a place by storm or assault*, is an expression used by Monsieur de Feuquieres, and exactly answers the
idea

idea of this attack ; of this species of surprize, which could in no shape be on the footing of *stealing into a place*, as the author ridiculously states ; but of coming near or before it by surprize, or with giving as little notice as possible to the enemy, in order afterwards to make your *vigorous impression*, and make that impression successful. It does not follow, even where the utmost precautions are taken, that because it's a *surprize*, in the strictest sense, there is to be no force used, and no fighting ; as Prince *Eugene* found at *Cremona*, *Mantua*, and *Brissac*, at every one of which he was repulsed, though he came before those places *by surprize*.

I come now to shew how *surprize* being the plan, and the necessary plan of this undertaking, *on the footing of a Coup de Main* ; that plan failed, and the very idea of it seemed vanished even before the fleet came in sight of the *French* coast, and much more still during the six days delay between that and the meeting of the Council of War.

For first, by the transports being taken up in the river, while the troops were assembled in the Isle of *Wight*, it happened that the embarkation was delayed near two months from the time of the first preparations, made pretty early in *July*.

2dly, No feint was ever made to draw off the attention of the enemy ; but on the contrary, all our preparations carried on in such a manner as clearly indicated the true design, *against the coast of France*, which however it might be overlooked by some of our politicians at home did not escape the vigilance of our enemy. For the assembling the troops at the Isle of *Wight*, shewed the destination was Southward ; but the victualling of the fleet for so short a time, and particularly the troop of horse embarked with forage for *six weeks only*,
I
shewed

shewed it was neither for *America*, nor for the *Mediterranean*; it could therefore only be for the coast of *France*.

And the scaling ladders, petards, and other preparations for a *surprize* were so publicly shipped, that they were mentioned in all the News-Papers.

From these circumstances alone, it was pretty plain to an intelligent observer, our design must be discovered: the intelligence received, during the delay at the Isle of *Wight*, plainly shewed it was discovered.

As early as 11th *August*, there was, in the *London Chronicle*, an article from *Paris*, saying, *The French knew our design was against their coast, but that it gave the court no uneasiness. That they should not draw a single man from Germany, but only send down to the coast, what was sufficient for its defence.*

Another article from *Rochefort*, *That an English vessel had been taken, which discovered our design to be against the Isle of Rhé or Oleron, or that part of the coast.*

15th *August*, a Captain of a vessel who had been prisoner at *St. Maloe's*, and was sent back to *Guernsey*, swore before a magistrate, that the Duke d'Aiguillon was come to visit the coast, that they were making all sorts of preparations there, and that he heard a large body of troops, he said upwards of 20,000 men, were to march through that place next day.

Soon after this, an intercepted letter to a *French* prisoner here, said, *The Duke d'Aiguillon had then finished the review of the coast, and ordered all things necessary for its defence.*

Captain *Cleveland*, Captain of a Man of War, about the same time spoke with a *Dutch* Man of War immediately from *Rochelle*, the first Lieutenant
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of which told him *the English were then expected at Rochelle, &c. but that they thought themselves so secure, they were making no extraordinary preparations.* This account was sent up to the Admiralty 10th August.

Thus even before the embarkation of the troops, was the alarm traced all along the *French* coast from *St. Maloe's, &c.* quite down to *Rochelle and Rochefort.*

The most sanguine now shook their heads, and, how little willing soever they may be to own it since, I know, from very good authority, that some of the chief promoters of this project in the cabinet told their friends, *They thought the opportunity was lost, and that the alarm had now been too long taken to have any hopes of success.*

With these auspicious omens for a surprize, the fleet sailed from *Spithead* on the 8th September, being about two months after the first so public preparations for this *secret* Expedition; and still sailed without any *newer or better* information of the coast or place they were going to, than those I have mentioned to have been received two months before; *so fatal was the least alarm still understood to be to the design.*

The very day after it sailed, a *Spanish* vessel bound to *Havre-de-Grace* past through our fleet, as did almost every day some neutral vessel.

On the 11th September, Captain *Proby* of the *Medway* spoke with a *Dutch* ship, the *Marguerita*, from *Vannes* to *Dort*, who said, *An embargo was then laid on all shipping in France, as they expected a descent on the coast, and particularly on the side of Rhé, Rochelle, &c.*

13th September, being then a little to the Westward of *Plymouth*, Captain *Gilchrist* of the *Southampton* brought into the fleet a *French* frigate, called
the

the *Emerald*, which he took off *Brest* the day before, among whose papers was found a letter to Captain *Perigni*, Captain of that ship, who was killed in the engagement, of which the following is an extract :

St. Mathieu 4th Sept. 1757.

“ I received lately your letter, my dear *Perigni*,
 “ in a trip I made to *Brest*. You know that I ar-
 “ rived there the 20th ; the Duke *d' Aiguillon* the
 “ day before in the evening. I was sent here the
 “ 21st, to inspect the batteries, and to see them in
 “ condition, &c.— If the marine has taken care to
 “ secure *Brest*, the land has not been idle. We
 “ have here, at two or three leagues about us, near
 “ 7000 regular troops, and 1500 garde-cotes. There
 “ are also regular troops and garde-cotes in the
 “ district of *Croisan* ; and all the batteries of that
 “ side are also prepared.”

By this it appears authentically, that the coast had been long alarmed, and that there were more regular troops upon it than our Ministers guessed ; 7000 near *Brest*, and more on the other side the *Brest Water*.

Afterwards it is said, there was farther information by some *Dutch* vessels from *Rochelle* of the alarm and preparations making in those parts.

The fleet came in sight of the Isle of *Oleron* on the 20th September, the 22d at night they entered the *Pertuis d' Antioche*.

The Isle of *Aix* was taken on the 23d.

The report from the Rear Admiral and Captains sent to sound and reconnoitre the coast, in order to discover a landing-place, was made on the 24th in the afternoon, and the Council of War met next morning, 25th.

Thus, I think, I have shewn, that *surprize* was really the plan of this Expedition; and also that the idea of it certainly no longer existed when the Council of War met. So that I do not say it was *improbable*, it was *impossible* the enemy, amidst all their alarm and care for every other part of the coast, should have totally neglected *Rochefort*, perhaps the most important, and one of the weakest on it, to the degree that is now supposed or *pretended*; to the degree of *not repairing a breach*, not making a *coupure* for their defence, when an enemy had been *actually in sight six days*. For, as our author says, p. 28. *Though we should not have too high an opinion of the French wisdom and ability; yet I do suppose, that in matters of defence, they do conduct themselves on principles similar to those which are adopted by the rest of mankind.*

But, says the Report of the board of General Officers, and so says the author after them, *It does not appear that there were then, or at any time afterwards, either a body of troops or batteries on the shore sufficient to prevent the attempting a descent.*

It is not quite clear, what number might be sufficient to prevent a descent: The Quarter-Master General, on the Expedition, Colonel *Wolfe*, being asked the question, said, "He imagined
" 1000 foot and 200 horse might be sufficient
" to oppose the landing of 2 or 3000 men from
" boats;" which was more by all calculations than the boats of the fleet contained. But as there were sand hills near the shore (which the author remarks, with a sort of triumph, were *no less than forty yards from high-water mark*, p. 37.) and as the troops could have no assistance from the cannon of the ships, it is imagined half that number doing their duty, might prevent it; and

and more than these were seen by Admiral *Broderick* on the 23d or 24th at that very place.

But in this the report has selected the only objection, on which no stress was laid, and which is not even taken notice of in the Council of War; for had the resistance to be expected in the landing been the chief objection, it certainly should have been risked, as it appears was the opinion of the Generals and the Council of War in their subsequent resolution to land; if they were repulsed in that attempt, the evil was not very great, perhaps the loss of a few hundred men; and certainly, as the author says, *Lives must be risked, and Christian blood spilt upon such occasions.* But the danger here arose from the total want of protection from the ships in case of a retreat; and the total insecurity of any communication with the fleet from the situation of the landing-place on the open bay: as appears from the words of the Council of War, the opinion of the Sea Officers given there, and the evidence of the Pilot who had had experience of it; and also by the depositions of Admiral *Knowles* and Admiral *Broderick* at the board of General Officers, p. 35 and 46.

And though in these times of clamour and enquiry, an Officer is almost afraid to name the word *Retreat*; I know of no one General of character, ancient or modern, nor no writer on the art of war, who has not looked upon that as a capital and most essential point in all military undertakings.

If you land in an *American* island, where you know the amount of the force that can come against you, you may be easy about it; but none but a madman could be indifferent about the retreat of his army from the continent of *France*.

I must also insist, if authority were wanting to
C 3
prove

prove a thing self-evident, that Lord Ligonier's paper delivered to Sir John Mordaunt does, notwithstanding the author's attempt to invalidate it, contain a most distinct and explicit instruction on this head, not at all weakened by any other part of those instructions.

His words, which do honour to his skill and judgment, are,

“ If an attempt is to be made on Rochefort, it
 “ will be the part of the Admiral to *know the coasts*
 “ *to cover the landing by the disposition of his ships,*
 “ and to destroy any barbette batteries the enemy
 “ may have upon the shore, still remembering
 “ that if the troops are landed at too great distance
 “ from the place, *the design will become dangerous,*
 “ *and probably impracticable.*

“ *A safe and well-secured communication between*
 “ *the camp and the sea, from whence you are to re-*
 “ *ceive your supplies of all sorts, is absolutely neces-*
 “ *sary ; THE WHOLE DEPENDS UPON IT.*”

It appears here upon the most respectable authority, *That the ships should lye up to assist the landing ; that the retreat, and also the communication with the ships, should be secured ; that the whole depends upon it ; and that the design would become dangerous and probably impracticable, if the troops were landed at too great distance from the place.*

Now it is certain the landing-place, or places near Chatelaillon, had all the disadvantage they could have under every one of these circumstances ; *the ships could not lye up within two miles ; the retreat and communication were not secured, and the landing-place was ten or twelve miles from Rochefort.*

But the author tells us gravely, that *by throwing up an entrenchment on the shore, the retreat would have been sufficiently secured ; and, with the*
 2 greatest

greatest injustice to Lord *Ligonier's* judgment, quotes his authority for this egregious blunder; as if casting up an entrenchment on the shore would prevent *the wind from changing to the West*, or *the open bay from being ruffled with a storm*; without which the securing the retreat by land, while the communication was cut off by sea, would be like constructing a *Tête de Pont* to repass a river, when you had no bridge to cross it.

But that a westerly wind would have cut off the communication, has been already proved, and even the author is candid enough to allow the *possibility of the winds changing*; which the Council of War thought a contingency too probable to risque the loss of the whole army upon, at a time when they had no prospect at all of success, in the only mode of attack which then offered.

But we are told, p. 37. that Sir *Edward Hawke* says in his letter to Mr. *Pitt*: *He and every one else were of opinion the landing might be effected.* I have already said, *That every one was of that opinion*, at least that it was *possible*; but I have also shewn, that *every one* (Sir *Edward Hawke* not excepted) *was against that landing*, as appears from the first Council of War, *not merely on account of the escalade.*—We are told also that Admiral *Broderick* says, “He could have got out of the boats without wetting his shoes!” that is true; but then the same Admiral *Broderick* also says, (being asked, *If the men of war could cover the landing or retreat?*) *He don't think they could do either the one or the other.* Court Martial, p. 45.

He also says, That the changing of the wind would have cut off the communication with the ships at that landing-place.—For, being asked, “Whether several winds might not have detained the fleet in the road of *Basques?*” he answers,

that " he refers to the Council of War, saying,
 " That the same wind which would have prevented
 " the troops from reembarking, would have de-
 " tained the Squadron there," *Enq.* p. 46.

Admiral Knowles also gives his opinion precisely to the same effect, and almost in the same words, *Enq.* p. 35. which shews, that there were *other considerations* attended to in that Council, besides *the opinion of the Land Officers on the escalade.*

But as a farther proof of Admiral Broderick's good opinion of this landing-place, the author tells us, that the Admiral declares, " That men of
 " war could come within *two miles*; and that the
 " sand hills were *forty yards* distant from high-
 " water mark."

These may be very good reasons in the new system of warfare; according to the old notions of things, they would have been reckoned very bad ones. As two miles is confessedly *out of gun-shot*, which all the Admirals declare at the Council of War; and *forty yards*, the distance of the sand hills, is about *one fifth of a point blank musquet-shot.*

So that I am very curious to know what the *Country Gentleman's* idea is of the utility of men of war *at two miles distance*; or, how near he thinks the sand hills should be to annoy the troops on their landing?

As to the effect of the bombs *in clearing the ground for a mile beyond them*, as we are told, p. 43. and *the landing under the protection of bomb-ketches*: it is so much the idea of a *Country Gentleman indeed*, that it is impossible to reason seriously upon it: it being known there were but two bomb-ketches in the fleet.

There is yet another extraordinary instance of this plain *Country Gentleman's veracity* on this same head, p. 41. where he tells us positively,
 " That

“ That Admiral *Knowles*, in concurrence with
 “ the Admiral and Captains who went to recon-
 “ noitre, had assured them (the Generals) there
 “ were two landing-places out of the reach of any
 “ battery; that the beach was dry, sandy, firm,
 “ &c. and though the cannon from the men of
 “ war could not annoy the troops, yet the bomb-
 “ ketches might,” &c.

I have looked over Admiral *Knowles*’s evidence with attention, and can find no such words in it any where, nor any thing relative to the landing-place at *Chatelaillon*, but what follows :

“ Being asked what kind of landing-place there
 “ was at *Chatelaillon* bay for boats ?” answered,
 “ *He was not there, but refers to Rear-Admiral*
 “ *Broderick,*” *Enq.* p. 45.

So that Admiral *Knowles*’s *Concurrence* does not add much weight to the opinion of those Gentlemen; what that was I have already stated.

Such was the nature of the intelligence received by the Council of War and by the General Officers on this head, and such their reasoning upon it.—
But Officers it seems should not reason! and one of them is expressly condemned for *judging by reasoning and intelligence*, p. 36. their duty all lying in the narrow compass of the word *Obedience*. *The first duty of a soldier is obedience.—If he is ordered on an attack, he is not to ask whether he can get back.—Who constituted them Counsellors of state, and submitted the propriety of their orders to their decision, &c?* p. 34.

It is rather odd, that the author himself should overturn all this fine declamation in the very next paragraph: where he says, “ This must be the case
 “ when orders are *express* and *positive*. Where in-
 “ deed *discretionary orders* are given, there arises a
 “ latitude and power of judging. *Such was un-*
 “ *doubtedly*

“*doubtedly the present case.*” He allows they had a latitude to judge *in the present case!* To his question therefore, *Who constituted them Counsellors of State?* the answer is easy, It was the author himself: he first constituted them so in order to condemn them afterwards for being so; since in reality their part was no more than this, that being to determine on the execution of an enterprize, *of which they were made the judges*, by his own confession, they did *presume so far* as to form that judgment on *reasoning and intelligence*, two assistants, which, if some friends of the author had consulted a little more fully, it would not have done them any discredit.

But to *think at all* was the crime; and to think about securing a *retreat* for the army, absolute cowardice: *If a soldier is ordered to an attack, he is not to ask whether he can get back*, p. 34.

The author to be sure means this of a General *acting with discretionary power*, or else it is impertinent, and no way applicable to the present question; and yet so applied, certainly constitutes a very curious doctrine for the command of armies. I remember in a silly Novel an account of a great General, called *Tête à Peruque*, or a *Wig-block*; who is described as a person of undaunted courage and heroic resolution (*a heaven sent general*) but who never made calculations, supposed difficulties, or thought of *retreats*; he makes a noble campaign with infinite personal spirit, and many brave exploits, but at the end of it has the misfortune to find himself and the remains of his army, after many defeats, caught in a mouse-trap.

Instances not much unlike it are to be found in more serious History, particularly that of a prince of *Saxe Eisenach*, who having landed 10,000 men in an island of the *Rhine*, *without securing his retreat*,

treat, was forced to surrender himself and his whole army by capitulation to Marshal *Crequi*.

Another instance of a similar kind happened, as I remember, to a corps of *Spanish* troops landed in *Ireland*, who were obliged to surrender prisoners of war, having no care taken for their retreat.

Monsieur *de Feuquieres* condemns the misconduct of the Duke of *Saxe Eisenach* as a most shameful breach of military duty, and ranks it among those dishonourable capitulations of places for which governors have been punished; not on account of the capitulation itself, which his situation made necessary, but of the imprudence with which he had brought himself into that situation, *Mem. de Feuq.* vol. iv. p. 214. Nor could any officer, or any man of common sense, form a different opinion of it, till this new system of Generalship was established.

Thus it stood with respect to the landing; the next part of the charge regards the attempt to be made on *Rocheport*. Where the board of General Officers declare, *That it does not appear to them, that there were any sufficient reason to induce the Council of War to believe that Rocheport was so far changed in regard to it's strength or posture of defence, as to prevent all attempts of an attack upon the place, in order to burn and destroy the docks, magazines, arsenals, and shipping.*

By the words *all attempts of an attack upon the place*, one should imagine, that a great variety of attacks or attempts offered themselves, in that Council of War; whereas it was impossible to have heard the examination with common attention or candour, and not perceive that the attempts on *Rocheport* were all *then* reduced to a single one, namely, that of a *Coup de Main* or surprize.

For

For first, it is known that an attack in form was out of the question, as the Chief Engineer declared before the Council of War in these words: *That he does not imagine any regular attack was intended against that (Rochefort) or any other place, the small quantity of artillery we have not being sent on that plan, Enq. p. 105.*

And, if that could not be done, neither was there any better chance of success against the docks or magazines, as the same gentleman declares before the board of General Officers, where being asked, *whether, though the Town could not be taken, we might not destroy the docks, magazines, &c. with bombs and red hot balls?*

He says, *Undoubtedly by carcasses and shells one might destroy a great many of the stores, but to do it in any tolerable degree, would require five times the number of mortars we had: Besides, such a method would take up time, and there would likewise be great difficulty in bringing up sufficient stores for that purpose to the place, Enq. p. 57.*

This could not well be otherwise, as the landing-place was not less than ten or twelve miles from Rochefort; as the transports could not lie nearer than a mile and half from the shore; and as the least ruffle of wind would have made the landing any stores impracticable *in that open part of the bay.*

But the regular attack of the place being thus found impracticable, as also any *considerable impression* on the magazines, docks, &c. on that side, it was plain, that in the question before the Council of War of the 25th, all was reduced to the consideration of the direct assault by storm or escalade. The nature of which, and the probability of its success, I shall now consider; as that whereon the whole of this question seems to depend,

pend, as far as relates to the resolution of the first Council of War.

First, then, it appeared by the concurrent testimony of the prisoners separately examined, that there was a Marshal of *France* at *Rochefort*. There were also by the whole tenor of their accounts, a considerable number of troops there, or in the neighbourhood which might be thrown in at pleasure.—The names and number of battalions had been particularly mentioned by some of them; which was confirmed by the appearance of men and officers in different uniforms on the shore, with colours, &c. A body of troops had been seen by Admiral *Broderick* on the 23d and 24th near *Chataillon*; another by Major *Destrisay* and others on the 24th near *Rockelle*; more were seen passing from *Oleron* to the main land, and another body near *Fouras*: There were certainly marines in *Rochefort*, even when Colonel *Clerke* was there, though in time of peace, there were 1,000; the dock-men are very numerous, as I have said, the place is populous, and the inhabitants constantly used to arms; there is generally, and was now said to be, a *Swiss* regiment there; there is always a company of cadets, and one of bombardiers; and the crews of the ships alone then in the river, if compleat, amounted to near 3,000 men.

So that exclusive of either troops or militia from the country or adjacent towns, there could not fail of being a garrison of some thousand men in the place; whereas our 10 battalions destined to the assault or escalade, consisted of no more than 7,288 men fit for service.

I desire the reader to recollect what has been said of the state of the place from Colonel *Clerke's* and the Pilot's evidence.

Now

Now from that state alone, it is plain that the hopes of success must be either from the opening by the river, or by an escalade of the rampart. As to the former, it must appear to any one at all acquainted with military affairs, that twenty-four, or at most forty-eight hours would make that part, so situated, as strong, (at least against a *Coup de Main*) as any part of the rampart, by means of a good entrenchment and palissade, especially as, besides the ditches mentioned, there was a *large canal* to pass; or rather *two*, as it must be twice past before you come into the place; and as that part, besides the cannon on the rampart, would be flanked by the broadsides of the five ships then in the river, being on the water level; and that within less than half musket-shot; the canal and ditches serving as *avant fossés*, to be past in sight of the enemy.

As to the rampart, it was strong and high, as I have said; but the exact height of it was not known, which was a capital defect in an attempt by escalade, as it would be difficult, if not impossible, to get it afterwards, and yet necessary to be known with precision. L. C. C—ke, sensible of this omission, says in his letter to Sir J. Lig — r,

“ I have thought since, that it would not have
 “ been amiss, if I had known for certain the exact
 “ height of the rampart, I think that it could not
 “ well exceed twenty-five feet, &c.”

It would indeed have been *not amiss*, but very material, as in an escalade, which was in a manner the only resource, every thing depended upon it.

“ I suppose, says Monsieur de Santa Cruz, that
 “ before you attempt the surprize of any fortified
 “ or enclosed place, you have an exact knowledge
 “ of its situation, its works, and *the height*
 “ of its walls, in order to carry ladders of a
 “ proper

“ proper height, or exact measure — *d’une juste*
 “ *mesure.*

“ It is impossible to scale walls that are too
 “ high, &c. for if you plant your ladders too per-
 “ pendicular, there will be no getting up them,
 “ and if you give them too much slope, they bend
 “ with every motion and break.”

If they are too long, they are easily overturned;
 if too short, they are absolutely useless.

Now though Col. C—ke in this account *sup-*
poses the rampart only twenty-five feet high, others
 acquainted with the place said, they imagined it
 was not less than thirty, and some even more.

Our ladders were part of them thirty, and part
 twenty-five feet long; if the rampart was twenty-
 five feet, our ladders of twenty-five would have
 been scanty, as there must be allowance made for
 their slope; if it was thirty feet, *quite too short*, and
 those of thirty feet scanty.

One of these ladders planted against the wall at
 the fort of *Aix*, was too short by several feet; and
 at the same time so weak and tottering, that several
 officers have declared, if their duty did not require
 it, they would not have gone up for 500 *l.* though
 no enemy opposed them. I mention this to shew in
 part how ticklish an operation a mere escalade is.

Indeed to that degree, that it is quite exploded,
 except where it can be done by surprize. I won’t
 enter into any of the many ways there are of de-
 feating it; but to shew I have not advanced any
 thing lightly, will here set down the opinions of
 some of the most approved authors on that subject.

Monsieur *de Feuquieres*, in his treatise on sur-
 prizes, says *,

* “ Une maxime generale est d’entreprendre toujours *avec*
 “ *secret, avec une connoissance parfaite de l’entreprise meditée*, de la
 “ diligence dans la marche, de la vivacité, dans l’exécution,
 “ & de beaucoup de *prevoyance* dans la retraite.

“ A con-

“ A constant maxim is to conduct these enterprises
 “ *with secrecy, with a perfect knowledge in the de-*

“ Il doit aussi être couvert par quelque démonstration, qui
 “ en cas qu’il parvienne à la connoissance de l’ennemi détourne
 “ son attention du véritable projet.

“ On doit avoir *une exacte connoissance du país qui conduit à*
 “ *l’objet de l’entreprise ; de sa situation, de sa force naturelle, de*
 “ *celle des troupes ennemies sur lesquelles on veut entreprendre ;*
 “ *de leur negligence ou précautions à se garder ; parceque de toutes ces*
 “ *connoissances depend la reussite du projet.*

“ La marche vers l’objet de entreprise doit être faite *avec un*
 “ *grand secret, & beaucoup de diligence.*

“ En general, rien ne doit être tenté sans une certitude pres-
 “ que sûre de réussir. Il faut donc avoir exactement fait re-
 “ connoître par des espions fideles & capables *le terrain des en-*
 “ *vironns de la place & tous les manquemens de sa garde.*

“ Il faut arriver de nuit avec grand silence.

“ Les places les plus exposées à être insultées de vive force
 “ sont celles dont les *ouvrages ne sont point revêtus*, parce que si
 “ la fortification de terre n’est pas entretenue & que les fossés
 “ ne soient pas à fond de cuve ou fort *sangeux*, *il n’est pas im-*
 “ *possible de surprendre ces places de vive force, lorsqu’on peut se*
 “ *porter devant avec assez de secret pour que l’ennemi ne soit pas*
 “ *averti de l’entreprise.*

Du Marq. De Santa Cruz.

“ Je suppose qu’avant de vous déterminer à vouloir surprendre
 “ une place ou lieu fermé, vous avez une connoissance parti-
 “ culiere de sa situation, de ses ouvrages & de la hauteur de ses
 “ murailles, afin de porter des eschelles d’une juste mesure.

“ Je suppose aussi que vous avez connoissance du nombre de
 “ ceux qui la defendent, de la maniere dont les gardes sont distribuées ;
 “ de combien d’hommes chacune de ces gardes est composée, &c.

“ Vous calculerez si vous pouvez vous retirer en sûreté du poste
 “ que vous voulez surprendre eu egard aux heures dont vous
 “ avez besoin pour la marche, pour l’expédition & pour le re-
 “ tour.

“ Les fossés pleins d’eau sont un obstacle aux escalades.

“ L’obscurité & le vent qui accompagnent les nuits d’hiver
 “ favorisent vos troupes pour n’être vues ni ouïes des ennemis.

De Monf. De Quinci, sur les surprises.

“ Dans toutes ces entreprises il est absolument nécessaire de
 “ sçavoir le nombre des habitants, & des troupes de la garnison ; la
 “ force & la situation des corps de garde, les lieux où l’on pose les
 “ sentinelles, l’ordre des rondes & des patrouilles, &c.

“ *sign*

“ *sign meditated, diligence in the march, vivacity*
“ *in the execution, and much precaution for the*
“ *retreat.*

“ It ought also to be covered by some ap-
“ pearance, which may divert the attention of the
“ enemy from the real object.

“ There ought to be an *exact knowledge of the*
“ *country that leads to the object of the enterprize,*
“ *of its natural strength, that of the enemy's troops*
“ *on whom the attempt is to be made, their neg-*
“ *ligence or precaution in their defence, &c. because*
“ *on all these depends the success of the project.*

“ The march to the place to be attacked, ought
“ to be made with great *secrecy and expedition.*

“ In general nothing ought to be attempted
“ without almost an absolute certainty of succeed-
“ ing. You must therefore have the place ex-
“ actly reconnoitred by faithful and able spies:
“ its *environs and all the defects of its guards.*

“ You must arrive by *night in great silence.*

“ The places the most exposed to be insulted,
“ are those whose works *are not faced*, because, if
“ the fortifications being of earth are not kept in
“ repair, and that the ditches are not wet or very
“ muddy, it is not *impossible* to surprize such a
“ place by storm or assault, *provided you can bring*
“ *your troops before it so secretly that the enemy is*
“ *not apprized.*

From the Marquis *De Santa Cruz.*

“ I suppose, that before you determine to at-
“ tempt the surprizing any fortified place, you
“ have an exact knowledge of its situation, its
“ works, and *the height of its walls in order to*
“ *carry ladders of a proper height, &c.*

“ Si la place qu'on projette de surprendre est si avant dans le
“ pais ennemi qu'on ne peut y arriver en un jour, il sera pour lors
“ difficile de reussir dans cette entreprise.”

D

“ I also

“ I also suppose, that you know the *number of*
 “ *those who defend it, the manner in which the*
 “ *guards are posted, of how many men these guards*
 “ *consist, &c.*

“ You will calculate whether you *can retreat*
 “ *with safety from the post you would surprize,*
 “ *considering the time necessary for the march,*
 “ *the attempt, and the return.*

“ *Ditches full of water are also an obstacle to*
 “ *escalades.*

“ The *darkness* and wind that accompany *winter*
 “ *nights* are favourable to your troops, because
 “ they prevent *their being seen or heard by the*
 “ *enemy.*

From M. De Quinci, on surprizes.

“ In all these enterprizes it is *absolutely necessary*
 “ *to know the number of inhabitants and of the*
 “ *troops of the garrison; the strength and situation*
 “ *of the guards, the places where the centinels are*
 “ *placed, the manner in which the rounds and patrols*
 “ *are made, &c.*

“ If the place you intend to surprize is so far
 “ advanced in the enemy's country, *that you can-*
 “ *not arrive there in a day, it will then be difficult*
 “ *to succeed in such an enterprize.”*

These are some among the many military rules and maxims upon this subject, which whoever is at the trouble of examining will see are in every circumstance contrary to the nature of the late scheme, and the manner of its execution as in the question before the first Council of War. For they neither knew the *coast nor country, the strength of the garrison, the guards the enemy mounted, the centinels they posted, nor the rounds they went, nor were informed with precision of the height of the rampart, &c.* What they appear to have known by positive evidence was, that *the ditch was wet, the*
ramparts

ramparts high and faced with stone; that the nights were light, and that they were so far from being able to arrive in one day, or to conceal their march, that the enemy must have known of their approach for seven or eight days at least, and seen every motion made for the attack.

Such was the nature of this attempt for surprising Rochefort, after the alarm, I have mentioned from certain authority, and after the fleet had already been seen six and must have been eight or nine days before that attempt could have been made.

I now desire the reader to recollect what has been said, touching *the only landing-places discovered*: he will then see that, in order to make this hopeless and truly impracticable attempt, equally contrary to the rules of war and reason, the Council or the Commanders in chief must have acted as contrary to common sense, to the instructions given, and to the prudent and sensible direction of our present Commander in chief of his Majesty's forces, by landing the troops at a great distance from the place, without any protection from the ships, and without any security for the communication with the fleet, or the retreat of the troops.

For had those been at all secured, it certainly was the intention of the Commander, as it was the opinion of the Council in general, hopeless as the prospect was, to have made the actual tryal. But it was not thought adviseable to risque the cutting off the whole army merely to reconnoitre with scarce a possibility of doing more; and a smaller number could not reconnoitre the place, as it lay so far up the country, without a certainty of being intercepted.

I should now think enough was said upon this subject, to convince every impartial reader, that the

determination of that Council of War, and the conduct of the General in adhering to that determination, were founded in reason, agreeable to the spirit of the orders and instructions with which he was sent, and to that *latitude and discretion* with which he was directed to judge.

But as the report of the board, and the author in support of it, seem to lay great stress in that, *It did not appear to them that there were sufficient reasons to induce the Council of War to believe that Rochefort was so far changed in respect to its strength or posture of defence, since the expedition was first resolved on in England, as to prevent all attempts, &c.*

I shall shortly recapitulate those circumstances by which I think it plainly appears, that *the strength and posture of defence of Rochefort, and the prospect of succeeding against it were very much changed since the Expedition was first resolved on in England*; though even then it was framed on no very promising grounds, at least on the footing of a Surprise, or *Coup de Main* only.

The circumstances, then unknown, which rendered it still more hopeless, and indeed quite impracticable *on that footing*, were the following:

1. The long delay since our preparations were publicly known.

2. The alarm all along the coast quite down to *Rochefort*, previous to, and during the voyage.

3. That the fleet had actually been seen on the coast six days, when the Council of War was held on the 25th.

4. That they must have been two or three days more in landing the troops and stores, and marching up to the place *to surprize it*.

5. That there was thereby time given to the enemy to assemble their troops, and that there

there was certainly a numerous garrison in the place.

6. That any hopes from the opening near the river were totally cut off as has been shewn.

7. That there was a Marshal of *France* then in the place.

8. That it was proved by positive witnesses the ditch was wet, or could be flowed with water all round.

9. That our Chief Engineer (Lieutenant-Colonel *Cl—ke*) declared at the Council of War, that that circumstance alone would defeat the escalade.

10. That the nights were light.

11. That the plan of the landing and approach were changed, by the failure of the attack on *Fouras*.

12. That at the only landing-places discovered near *Chatelaillon*, the ships could not lie up to cover the landing or retreat.

13. That those landing-places being on the open bay, all retreat and communication with the ships would at once be cut off by the winds coming to the West, which was expected every day.

In every one of which circumstances it is plain, there was a change *since the Expedition was first resolved on in England*, as these circumstances either did not exist, or were not known at that time; and every one of them did undoubtedly *tend to put Rochefort in a better posture of defence*, against the intended *surprize*, and render the success of it quite impracticable.

So much that, had but half these circumstances been known *before the Expedition was resolved on*, I believe there is scarce a man in *England* wild enough to think it would or ought to have been sent; *at least on that plan*.

Such were the circumstances in which the *strength and posture of defence of Rochefort* were

changed, and doubtless most essentially changed *since the Expedition was resolved on*. A numerous garrison in the place, a wet ditch, light nights, and a long alarm, were ugly circumstances against an escalade; these were the very circumstances apprehended, *when the secret was so studiously kept*; when it was thought *dangerous to get intelligence even in the most private way*; and when the Ministry rejected all proposals for a plan to attack the place in form, *for fear it should take up six or eight days*: a regular attack was not advisable that might take up six or eight days, but a *Coup de Main* might be *reasonably* attempted at the end of that time! This is one among many of our new doctrines on the art of war. As to any material alterations in the form or construction of the works that could never be the object of all this caution and apprehension for the secret, as they are not to be made on such warning.

Having thus gone through the consideration of the report, as far as relates to the resolution of the first Council of War, I must now remark some extraordinary instances of our author's candor, judgment, and veracity in his observations upon it.

First, as to the opening in the rampart, he tells us, p. 50. "That *Bonneau* the fisherman, assured Colonel *Clerke*, that upon the 21st of that very month, when our fleet was on the coast, that very spot remained as open, and as unfortified, as when Colonel *Clerke* saw it in the year 1754; and that this, though *reported to the General*, he *would not believe*." I have looked at the part of the Enquiry referred to *viz.* p. 52. and do not find there, nor indeed elsewhere, that any such report was made to the General by Colonel *Clerke*, much less that *the General would not believe it*, as the author asserts.

What

What Colonel Clerke says, *Enquiry* p. 51 and 52, is, “ That *Bonneau* the Fisherman, whom he examined on the 28th, after the Council of War had come to a resolution to land, and who had been examined by Major General Conway, &c. seemed to be very distinct in regard to many particulars, for so common a man, much more than he could have imagined; he mentioned particularly that he went by Rochfort on the 21st of the month, and that the place which he, Colonel Clerke, described to him as open and unfortified, was in the same condition that day.” These are Colonel Clerke’s words, on which I have two things to remark, besides the veracity of this report being made to the General, and his not believing it: As first, that it was on the 28th, after the second Council of War had determined to land, and consequently could not any ways affect the resolution of the first Council of War; and secondly, that the man, by that account, had only past by Rochfort, at least by that part in question, and consequently that an entrenchment thrown up there, which is not a very conspicuous or striking object, might easily escape the observation of a fisherman passing by in a boat.

As to the General reasoning on the nature of this opening, I refer to what has been said in the former part on that subject: But as it is affirmed, *That all the reasoning relative to the throwing up an entrenchment, and fortifying that opening was only supposition*, I must observe, that the evidence of *Pierre Girard*, who was there on the 20th September, the day before *Boneau* past by, and deposed, “ That the Avant guard (which is the part immediately before that opening) was then fortified and defended by a fascine battery of several pieces of cannon just finished,” *Enq.* p. 58. As also the Postscript of the Letter from Rochfort of the 18th, found in

the Priest's house on the Isle of *Aix* ; which says, *the Governor was then taking the best precautions for securing the place*, prove it was not mere supposition. But granting that it were supposition, the supposition that the enemy would on expectation of an immediate attack, certainly entrench and fortify that opening (unless they could overflow the ground) is so natural, that it would be stupidity not to suppose it. *That we should never take it for granted, that all is done which ought to be done even in France*, I do agree is reasoning right, as the author says; but to suppose that an enemy will not do any thing at all, or will neglect such things as are things of course, and can neither be overlooked, nor forgot, is not to reason at all; and I think one might just as well suppose an enemy would not fire their muskets, or draw their swords, as that with hands and materials at command, they should not make up a *breach in their rampart*. To make strained calculations of what your enemy will do argues timidity, but not to make any calculations at all argues folly; and an army may as well have no General, or a General no head, if such calculations are not made. — One of the greatest Generals among the moderns, the Duke of *Parma*, once mist an opportunity of taking *Henry IV.* of *France*, who came out to skirmish with a small party of light horse; but being reproached with it afterwards, when it was known the king was there, he answered*, “ That he should do the same again, “ *because his conduct was founded in reason*, as he “ thought he had to do with a General of an army, “ and not with a Captain of *Hussars*.” He

* “ Che se fosse a farla tornarebbe a far la medesima deliberatione perche era dettata dalla ragione havendo creduto di aver da fare con un Capitano Generale d'un exercito, & non con un Capitano di cavalli leggieri.” *Davila, Hist.*

spoke

spoke like a man and a soldier, as he had acted; and felt himself above judging, or being judged, by *subsequent intelligence*.

I must add to this article of *supposition* what has appeared farther relative to the fortifying this opening: First, Colonel Clerke declares, “ That such
“ an entrenchment as he himself threw up in the Isle
“ of Wight might be thrown up in a day and an
“ half, or perhaps even in a day.” Enq. p. 56.

As in fact, Ten yards of that entrenchment, though of a stronger profile than an ordinary entrenchment, and in so holding a clay that it was necessary to mattock it, was thrown up by ten men, which was not so many hands as might have been employed on it, in thirty-six hours.

2dly, Lieutenant Roy Engineer, deposed at the General Court Martial, “ That in an ordinary soil
“ so small an extent of entrenchment as sixty,
“ an hundred, or three hundred yards, might be
“ thrown up; and in the space of two or three
“ days made so strong as to render it unassailable
“ till such time as it was battered and laid open by
“ cannon; and in the same time he thinks even a
“ covered way, glacis, and perhaps an advanced ditch
“ might be made.” Court Martial, p. 89.

Colonel Clerke also declares he imagines, “ That
“ such an Entrenchment might be thrown up,
“ so as to put it on a footing with the rest of the
“ place in a few days time.” Court Martial, p. 34.

I shall now sum up the evidence on this head, by which, I think, it will appear there is a *demonstration*, on the footing of that evidence, that Rochefort could not be taken by *escalade*.

It was proved to the Council of War by *direct and positive evidence*, that the ditch could be filled with water. Enq. p. 105.

Colonel

Colonel Clerke declared before the same Council of War, that, if it were so, *the rampart could not be scaled*, Enq. p. 105.

Colonel Clerke also declares at the General Court Martial, that *in a few days the opening might be made as strong as the rampart*. General Court Martial, p. 34.

So that *the rampart being unassailable by an escalade, and the opening made as strong as the rampart*; it is plain, on that evidence, that unless the French had neglected to make the entrenchment in *eight days*, which might have been made in *two*; a neglect which, I think, I have shewn was not only improbable, but *impossible*; then it seems *impossible* also on the evidence before that Council of War, and on Colonel Clerke's own principles, *That the place could be taken by escalade*.

Before I go into the author's *candid reflexions* on the evidence relative to the ditch being flowed, it will be proper to obviate an assertion of his (for he loves *assertions*) which would save the trouble of all argument on that head; namely, *That a couple of field pieces would blow up a sluice in half an hour, and then what would become of the wet ditch?* p. 54.

Suppose I were to imitate the author's style and method of reasoning; and answer this round laconic assertion by as round an one, *viz. That a couple of field pieces could NOT blow up a sluice in half an hour?* my logick would certainly be as good, and my assertion, I believe, much better and truer.

For, if wet ditches were to be disposed of with this expedition and facility, I fancy few Engineers would have been at the trouble of making them by raising sluices with great labour and expence; nor would Marshal *Vauban*, a tolerable judge in those cases, have given his opinion as he does, that *those*
ditches

ditches which are dry, but can be flowed with water, are the very best sort of ditches for the defence of a fortified place.

Les Meilleurs (Fossés) sont ceux qui étant secs peuvent être inondés, Att. & Def. p. 26.

He constructed many on that plan; and doubtless was unacquainted with the author's secret for blowing up his sluices with two field pieces of cannon in so short a space of time.

In the present case it seems particularly difficult; as one does not at first sight conceive how *two field pieces* could be mounted in battery, or stand at all against a place which is able to mount above 100 pieces of battering cannon; and was under no necessity of raising batteries, as they could run their cannon to any part of the rampart, and open what embrasures they pleased. And certainly wherever the sluices were, they must be under protection of the rampart.—So that the author must first *make the sluices as he pleases*, next *place them as he pleases*, and lastly, engage the *French not to fire their cannon* (which is just as probable a supposition as their not raising *the entrenchment*) and then, perhaps, his *two little cannon* may do something.

I come now to his reflexions upon the state of the ditch equally just and true with most of the foregoing; particularly where he speaks of the *concurrent testimony of Colonel Clerke, and the French Engineer, that it was a dry one*: By which one would imagine, that this *concurrent evidence* was produced at the Council of War of the 25th, and was among the arguments urged against the resolution of that Council; whereas it appears by Colonel Clerke's testimony, *Enq. p. 54.* that this evidence of the *French Engineer* was not procured by Colonel Clerke till the 26th, *being the day after that Council of War sat*, nor communicated

to

to Sir John Mordaunt till the 27th, which, as Major General Conway remarks, *Enq.* p. 54. was the day he made two different propofals for landing, and the day before it was unanimously resolved in the second Council of War to land.

So that it can poffibly have no weight againft the conduct of the Generals, or the resolutions of the Councils of War, being fubfequent to that which resolved not to land, and previous to that which determined to land.

As to the *contradictory evidence* on the fubject of the ditch being wet mentioned by Sir John Mordaunt, on which the author plays fo ingenioufly, it does not appear what it was; but, by the testimony of fome members of the Council of War examined at the Court Martial, it amounted to no more than that the ditch was by fome one or more of the prifoners faid to be *ordinarily dry*, but *not that there were no sluices, or that it was not poffible to fill it.* Proceedings of the General Court Martial, p. 68, and 101.

Now then let us confider a little that evidence, which, it clearly appears, was produced before the Council of War relative to the ditch being wet, as ftated in thofe minutes or evidence taken by the faid Council, which make a part of it, and which our author again laments, p. 50. were *totally fuppreffed.*

First then the evidence of Lieutenant-Colonel Clerke is in the following words: “ Being asked, if
“ the ditch were flowed with water, whether he
“ fhould then think it practicable to take the
“ place by efcalade? faid, *He thought not; but*
“ that when he faw the ditch, *it did not appear to*
“ *him capable of being flowed.*”

On the other hand, Monsieur de Bonneville, volunteer, being asked what he knew of Rochefort,

fort, said, “ That there are sluices there by which
 “ they can flow the ditch, and *that it was full of*
 “ *water all round when he was there.*”

The pilot of the *Neptune*, being called in, said,
 “ That he had been very frequently at *Rochefort*,
 “ that he had commanded a small vessel there
 “ many years: that they have sluices *near the*
 “ *Hospital*, by which they can fill the ditch with
 “ water; and *that he has seen water in it quite*
 “ *round the town.* Enq. 105.

There is also mention made of a confirmation of
 this evidence by prisoners, but as that is but
 slightly mentioned, and at best is not the most
 eligible kind of evidence, where any better is to
 be had, I shall entirely wave that; and then, I
 think, I may appeal to the candor of all mankind,
 even almost to that of the author, whether the evi-
 dence of a gentleman saying, *He thought the ditch*
 “ *could not be flowed;*” is to be weighed against
 the positive declaration of two credible witnesses,
 deposing “ that they saw the *ditch filled with wa-*
 “ *ter all round the town;*” one of whom, says he,
 had lived many years at the place, and particularly
 describes the manner in which the ditch was filled.

I say *credible witnesses*, in spite of the author’s
 reflexions on Monsieur *Bonneville*, as their evidence
 then appeared credible, and stood unimpeached;
 if it was false, it certainly was not the fault of that
 Council, it deceived them, as I believe it would
 have deceived any court in the world; and it must
 require all the good-nature of the author to sup-
 pose they themselves contributed to that deception.

But before I take leave of Monsieur *Bonneville*,
 I must observe another remarkable instance of our
 author’s veracity in his account of that gentleman,
 and his evidence, p. 54. where he tells us that he
 said, “ *To the best of his recollection*, there was wa-
 “ ter

“ter in the ditch when he was there, &c.” I have already quoted his words from the Council of War itself, and therefore need not repeat them ; those words are *as positive as words can be* ; I have also asked several members of that Council of War, who all agree those were his words : and who also agree that his scheme of *filling up that ditch* put so emphatically in *Italicks*, was not so much as mentioned in his evidence at that Council ; nor by any information I can get at any time *previous* to it. After he had heard of Colonel *Clerke*’s opinion, declaring, that *if the ditch was wet, the place could not be escaladed* ; he did indeed advance this doctrine of filling up a wet ditch with sand bags, in order to plant scaling ladders upon them : a doctrine so wild and extravagant, that though they had not had the opinion of the Chief-Engineer on the Expedition, Colonel *Clerke*, diametrically opposite to it, the idea of filling up the ditch of a town with sand bags, in order to make a foundation large enough for thirty or forty scaling ladders abreast, and then to plant those ladders in sight of an enemy, and scale walls of twenty-five or thirty feet high, is so ridiculous, that one must have a very mean opinion of a Council of War resolving to land an army, especially such an army, such an handful of men for such an experiment.

But this Monsieur *Bonneville*, the author *has heard, and is well founded in asserting it (as well as in many more things he asserts) was under the protection of one of our Generals* ; that is a part of his crime and of the General’s : now as from this emphatical mention of so insignificant a circumstance, were it true, one would imagine there was some terrible secret history, or some wicked combination suspected between these persons protecting and protected. I have taken some pains to inform myself

myself of the history of this gentleman, by which I find (and *I am very well founded in what I assert*) that Monsieur *Bonneville*, a *Swiss* gentlemant, and a Protestant, formerly in the *French* service with Marshal *Saxe*; and, since his death, four years in the *Prussian* service, was taken into ours, and sent as a Captain, in Lord *Loudon's American* Regiment, to *America*; that he had not been long returned from thence, when he was one day mentioned to some of the Generals and others concerned in this Expedition, as a person who might be of use on such an occasion, being acquainted with the *French* service, and *also with most of their places, so that he might be able to give them some useful intelligence.*

This being afterwards reported to the Ministry, they thought proper to send him down, *on this footing*, to the Isle of *Wight*, with a strong letter of recommendation, as I have heard, to the Commander in Chief; which was the first of his introduction to any of the Generals on the Expedition. By the distribution made afterwards of the Officers of the Staff, &c. in the several Men of War, this gentleman *happened* to be put on board the same ship with *one of the Generals*, who, till his arrival at the Isle of *Wight*, had never seen, nor, till some few days before, ever heard of Monsieur *Bonneville*. This, I believe, is the history of that gentleman, as far as relates to this Expedition, and to the very small part he appears to have acted there; which was only that of being called as an evidence to a plain matter of fact; of which he must certainly have been a very competent witness.

I cannot quite leave the subject of the ditch, without taking notice of another observation made by the author relative to it, *viz.* that the ditch could not be flowed on account of the level of the ground: *Que cela ne pouvoit être à cause de l'inégalité*
du

du Terrain; and that our Generals should not have doubted about the filling the ditch of a place *which lay on the side of an hill*. This would certainly be true, had the fact been so made out to them; but it happened otherwise, as by all the accounts of *Rockefort*, they had always understood that it was *on a flat*, and entirely drained from *marshes*, &c. as the same evidence, which had seen water quite round, declared it to be so; and as Colonel *Clerke* seemed by no means clear of the level of the ground so as to determine positively whether the ditch could be filled by sluices or not; the most that was then described being *a gentle rise* of the ground; the author is pleased to exalt it into an hill; though even at the Court Martial Colonel *Clerke* seems to speak rather dubiously on this subject, and though *he conceives* the upper part is higher than high-water mark, he owns *it is difficult to judge of the level of ground with the eye*. Court Martial, p. 35.

I come now to the attack of *Fouras*, and the consequences of it, on which subject the author begins p. 36. with asserting, “That as to taking
“ that fort by land, without a sea operation, it
“ never entered into the heads of any of the Coun-
“ cil to order it to be reconnoitred, &c.”—And
“ that it was highest imputation on the Council of
“ War never to have considered this point till af-
“ ter they had determined to lay aside the only measure
“ which made the fort worth attacking.” And again, “Is it not astonishing that when Vice-
“ Admiral *Knowles* had reported the impracticabi-
“ lity of taking it by sea; the Generals should
“ first lay aside *all thoughts of prosecuting the whole*
“ *plan* before they ever asked, whether this ne-
“ cessary place could be taken without the as-
“ sistance of ships?” p. 56.

But

But first, it appears that *Fouras* was reconnoitred together with the rest of the coast by Admiral *Broderick*, and the four Captains who attended him, and who, by their report, reconnoitred from *Rockelle* to *Fort Fouras*.

It appears also by what I have already said, of the proposals for landing near and attacking that fort; that a *land attack* was not out of the question.

Though at that time (I mean before the report was made by Admiral *Broderick*) *Thierri*, the pilot of the *Magnanime*, who was then much depended on, having declared, *He could carry a ship up to it, and beat it down in half an hour*; which then seemed the opinion of the Admirals also; this occasioned those proposals being made *for a joint operation by land and sea*. Yet it also appears by Sir *John Mordaunt's* evidence, that after the report of Admiral *Broderick* and the Captains, who had found *no landing near Fouras*, and after Admiral *Knowles* had reported that *Fouras* could NOT be attacked by sea; all thoughts of attacking it by a *land operation only* were not laid aside, for “ that it was proposed by “ Major-General *Conway* to go that afternoon to “ the Isle of *Aix*, to reconnoitre from thence, whether they could find out any place near or towards “ *Fouras*, and also to examine the prisoners,” Enq. p. 25. Sir *John Mordaunt* also declares, they did thereupon go to the Isle of *Aix*, where the prisoners were, and afterwards that the prisoners and other witnesses were examined that evening.

But the information then obtained not being favourable to *the landing near Fouras*, or *attack of that fort on the land side* :

In this situation the General thought it necessary some *immediate determination* should be come to in regard to the landing, and the *Coup de Main*; already too long delayed; he called a Council of

War for that purpose, and it seems impossible, I think, to have come to any other resolution than they did, informed as they then stood, without risking the whole of his Majesty's troops upon an attempt in which there scarce seemed a *possibility* of success.

In regard to their *immediate resolution to go home again*, mentioned p. 36. it is false, and has been already confuted.

The only question therefore remaining on this head is, whether after thus giving up the *Coup de Main* or *escalade* (which is confessed) they therefore gave up, or *laid aside the great object of the Expedition*, as the board of General Officers declare, or the *only measure which made the fort worth taking*, as the author advances, p. 37.

First then, to prosecute the idea of *Fouras*, it appears that on the 26th, which was the day after the Council of War, several schemes were agitated among the Admirals and Generals, and evidence examined, *particularly concerning the situation of Fouras*, *Enq.* p. 18. and that, in consequence hereof, it was again proposed by General Conway to go and reconnoitre the forts of *Fouras*, *l'Eguille*, &c. which was done next morning from the Tower of the fort of *Aix* with a telescope. Here, as Sir *John Mordaunt* says in his Narrative, "there was some difference of opinion in regard to an attempt upon it." *Enq.* p. 18. General Conway, in his Narrative, says, "He gave his opinion for the landing and attack of that fort, &c. but that being in general judged too difficult, it was dropt." *Enq.* p. 38. Or as Sir *John Mordaunt* says: "No final resolution taken till the afternoon, when a proposal was made to land at *Chatelaillon*, and make a sudden attack upon *Fouras*, and the other forts leading to and upon the

“ the mouth of the river *Charente*, with the land
 “ *forces.*” Enq. p. 18.

This proposition was by Sir *John Mordaunt* referred to a general Council of War, and there (as appears by that Council) unanimously resolved upon. “ But this, says the author, was done *for*
 “ *the sake of employing the soldiers*, without in-
 “ tending to draw any other utility from it. p. 56. And afterwards, “ That the *risque* (of the re-
 “ treat) which was magnified when it was to justifi-
 “ fy the Generals in the non-obedience of their
 “ orders, sunk to nothing,” *when the only con-*
sideration was, whether it would not be safer for
them to do something that might allay the national
clamour against them.

But how does this appear? I do not think the words alluded to in Sir *John Mordaunt's* Letter, Enq. p. 109. authorise such a conclusion, and therefore must agree with the author of the candid reflexions, that nothing but *a zeal to carry on the enterprize*, and *a perseverance in the prosecution of it*, could have been the foundation of those propositions. Nor is it true, *that the same risque was run in regard to the retreat*; as the knowledge now obtained of the weakness of *Fouras* on the land side, and the situation of that fort, in still water, made it in a good measure secure; at least greatly diminished the *risque*; nor was that operation confined to the attacking one insignificant fort, or to the paltry view of *allaying clamour*, as is asserted, but by taking the forts that guard the river, and thereby possessing the channel quite up to *Roche-fort*, was meant as a solid method really *to force by a vigorous impression, and not to steal into the place*: As would have been shewn, had the board thought proper to enquire into the nature of that proposition, which was the subject of the second Council

of War from the General Officer (of no less rank than the second in command) who, in his Narrative, says he made it, *Enq.* p. 38.—This at least I have heard from hands, and, in a manner, not to doubt of it. I will go a step farther and declare, that if any thing except our *favourite* but *foolish Coup de Main* will be allowed to be the *great object of the enterprize*, if the taking the town, or destroying the magazines, have any title to be called so, that *object* would have been more solidly and sensibly pursued by the attack of the forts on the 27th or 28th, than by the hopeless landing for the escalade alone on the 25th or 26th, when that landing would probably have been made.

As by taking these forts, the army would be masters of the river navigable quite up to *Rochefort*, and might then either bring up frigates, or at least any quantity of artillery, stores, &c. they pleased from the fleet, might raise batteries on each side the water, and, if they could not take the town (of which they would have had a much better chance this way) might at least have had some hopes of destroying the magazines, &c.

Such was the nature of this plan; nor could it indeed be otherwise, the idea of attacking the forts on the river, without any farther view, being too senseless for any Child, much more any Officer of rank in the army to propose, and much too ridiculous for *eight* gentlemen of character and experience in the service to come into. What was the proposition as stated in that Council of War? *To take the forts leading to and upon the mouth of the river Charente*; and what then? why then, says the author, turn about and go home; *the Generals would not risque their army from Fouras*. Though in possession of the forts that guard the river, and consequently of the river (for those higher up were described

described either as very weak forts, or little more than batteries to the water) and though no army opposed them, yet their determination, he believes, was to finish there and to go home ! Which would be just such an operation as to storm the out-works of a town without any view to taking the place ; in short, it is such an idea as I have no patience to reason about ; nor have I faith enough to believe that any of our Generals could either make or come into so trifling and ridiculous a project.

There were also other schemes agitated among the Generals and Admirals, in which *the great object* was not forgot ; particularly that mentioned in General *Conway's* Narrative, “ For attacking the castle of *Oleron*, and passing from thence to the Continent between *Brouage* and the *Charente*, which is about a league, and from thence not more than two leagues to *Rockefort* ; and as no attempt was probably expected on that side, we might possibly succeed so far as to destroy some of the ships or magazines.” *Enq.* p. 38. For both the magazines and town lay quite open to the river on that side, without either rampart or batteries to defend them ; as Colonel *Clerke's* Letter shews, *Enq.* p. 66.—I have heard that this scheme went so far, that an order was actually signed for putting it in execution : however, I don't mean to dispute the grounds upon which it was laid aside, I make no doubt they were very good ; what I proposed to shew was, that the General Officers did neither *immediately resolve to go home*, nor to give up *the great object of the Expedition*, as the author asserts, but did by every means study to make the most of the plan ; and that after the vain hopes of a *surprize* and an *escalade* (upon which it proceeded) were *reasonably laid aside* as an operation quite senseless after so long an alarm, the
great

great object of the Expedition was not therefore laid aside.

But as the prospect in these attempts was great on one hand, the difficulties were judged great on the other, and by some thought quite insuperable; as, being furnished with no plans of those forts, the intelligence obtained in regard to them not being thoroughly to be depended upon, and the enemy having by so long an alarm had time to assemble their troops, an operation of this sort must be very hopeless at best, if not quite impracticable.

Yet while any even the smallest prospect of success remained, it was thought an attempt of this sort was justifiable, as the retreat would now be secured, and it might then be seen what farther could be done.

Such it is to be supposed were the ideas and intentions of the superior Officers in both services when they entered into the proposal made at the second Council of War; they could not indeed be otherwise, as the thing was self-evident; though their opinions of, or hopes from that operation, probably varied according to their different judgment of things.

What must be confessed is, that those in the Council of War, who had least opinion of those operations, and least hopes of success from them, shewed by their readiness to concur in what was proposed, at least equal zeal and inclination to carry the service intended into execution.—They could not have the same reason for persevering in them. Which naturally enough accounts for what the author is, or pretends to be so much surprized at, *viz.* “That being prevented from landing on the
“ 28th, they should not (according to the author’s
“ phrase) *think it worth while to detain the fleet a*
“ *day, &c.*” He is to be sure aware, that it was
not

not for *one day only* the fleet was to be detained ; that the operation was now become very critical ; that, as Sir *John Mordaunt* declares in his Narrative, “ It was imagined the fleet was to be employed in more considerable services after this Expedition was over ;” and that the time for its return had been very strictly limited in his Majesty’s instructions. In this situation, since it was not thought proper to hold a General Council of War (Vid. Court Martial, p. 114.) it will not seem extraordinary, that those Land-officers of the Council of War, who had no great opinion of this operation at first, did not think it expedient to prosecute it any farther ; nor that the General Officer, not first in command, who had made the proposal, rather chose to acquiesce in the opinion of the Commander in Chief and the other Officers of the Council of War, so formed as appears, than take the whole on himself in so delicate a situation against that general opinion ; as he declares, *Eng.* p. 39. Nor do I think there is room for either censure or astonishment, or for the ridicule attempted by our author, in any part of this proceeding.

This, I think, is a fair and true state of our late unfortunate Expedition from its first rise to its final disappointment. But I hope while the reader reflects coolly on this, he will also remember this was not our first Expedition to the coasts of *France*. It would have been the *first successful one* among all our modern attempts, had it proved so.

Sir *Stafford Fairborne* sailed 1706, with a large armament to the same place, and with the same success.

The Duke of *Buckingham* was baffled before a small fortress in the Isle of *Rhé*.

And

And General *Talmash*'s merit, in knowingly sacrificing himself and some hundred men to his unjustifiable vanity, is now for the first time discovered and applauded; his success was like the former.

Nor was that of our neighbours better than our own; Admiral *Tromp*, with sixty ships of the line, and 10,000 land-forces, sailed 1674 to this very coast, and was not disgraced for returning even *without an attempt*, nor reckoned either a coward, a fool, or a traitor.

I don't mention all our idle parades on the coasts of *France*, nor our foolish, ill-calculated bombardments of towns; whose damages would have been more than repaid by the expence of our preparations; nor do I mean from these to conclude that *France* is *invulnerable*; nor even that the attempt on *Rochefort* was impracticable. Nothing is more dangerous than arguing from precedents, especially in military cases, of which scarce two are alike; though I think they are as good proofs against the attempt, as the taking of *Bergen-op-zoom* and *St. Philip's* are in its favour; what I propose in mentioning the failure of our former Expeditions, is not to prejudice, but to take off prejudices.

I mean to lessen the violence of our disappointment, and to soften the sharpness of the unjust and unnecessary suspicions, propagated on this occasion, by the examples of both great and brave men, who have either failed in attempts of this kind, or not judged it expedient to make them on grounds perhaps much lighter and less conclusive than what weighed in the Council of War on the 25th *September*.

In a Council of War held on board the *Breda*, Admiral *Russel's* ship, 1692, it was agreed, "Not
" to

“ to attempt *St. Maloe's*, as the troops could do no service without the assistance of the ships.”

Not to attempt *Brest*, “ For fear they should be wind-bound on the coast; and because the Land-officers declared, *they could do nothing without the protection of the fleet.*”

Also not to attack *Rockefort*, “ The season being so far spent, and the place lying so deep in the Bay.” This, I think, was on the 28th July.

Yet on this Council appear the most respectable names both in the land and sea-service; Admiral *Russel*, Sir *Ralph Delaval*, Sir *George Rooke*, Sir *Cloud. Shovel*.—The Duke of *Leinster*, the Earl of *Galway*, the Earl of *Argyle*, &c.

On the *Cadiz Expedition 1702*, under the Duke of *Ormond* and Sir *George Rooke*; the reasons that chiefly weighed against attacking the Isle of *Cadiz* were, “ That from some intelligence received from Mr. *Methuen*, &c. and from the concurrent testimony of fishermen taken on the coast, it appeared that the enemy had about 4,000 disciplined troops, and 1,000 horse, &c. that the fleet could give no other assistance than covering the landing, and that it would be impossible to supply the troops from the fleet in blowing weather.” From these circumstances the attempt was judged impracticable, though the Duke of *Ormond* had 13,500 land-forces, with battering cannon, and did not depend on a *Coup de Main*.

It is true, Sir *George Rooke* was blamed for his conduct in this Expedition, but as true that it was from the malice of his enemies; that no matter was found against him on an Enquiry; that all foreign historians, as well as our own (except Bishop *Burnet*, who takes every occasion to censure him with too apparent a prejudice) have constantly justified him; and that he received the thanks of the House of

Commons for his great services done the nation in the course of that very Expedition.

I have thus gone through my tedious, troublesome task; which I heartily wish, not for my own, but the sake of those concerned, may be read with the same candor I have writ it. It has no fallies of wit to engage, no bold strokes of invective to awaken, none of ridicule to amuse; it is what it professed to be, an argument, not a declamation. I have confined myself in the dull, humble path of mere defence; I have dissented with candor where I might have blamed; I have even praised where it was the interest of my cause to condemn; though I could have worked up the piece with other colours; I might have arraigned, as well as vindicated; I might have declaimed; I might have ridiculed: But the charms of truth are greater with me than those of vanity; I write to convince, not to please; I despise pamphleteering, and the dirty, ungenerous war of words; and I abhor that baneful spirit of party, which so shamefully mixes its poison in all the transactions of this unhappy island.

I sigh as the author does for the calamities of this country; I lament our past disgraces; I look with horror on those too probably reserved for us.

Disappointed in our perhaps too sanguine expectations here; outwitted in *America*, and overpowered in *Germany*; at home, abroad, at land, at sea, our prospect is every where unpleasant.

Yet because we are disappointed, let us not be unjust; to preach candor to men immersed in party is preaching to the winds; but justice founded in plain facts, and plain reason, may perhaps find its way to their hearts through all the prejudices with which they are guarded.

I lament as the author does; I mourn over the long list of our General Officers thus condemned

as it seems to insignificance and inactivity. If they are really what *of late they have been represented* to be, I must think them a disgrace and a burthen to their country; if while *the men are brave, there are no commanders to lead them on*; and if they are either unwilling or unworthy to be employed in her most essential services, while boys are called forth from the rank of Colonels and Lieutenant-Colonels to head her armies, and have commands on which almost the being of this country depends,

Where indeed, as the author says, *where is the glory of the British Name!* if this be so. I should not have ventured to draw the picture the author has drawn; I thought them *able*, and sure they are *willing* to serve their country!

Or if this be the melancholy truth, as he insinuates, let him remember there is one blame at least not theirs who went on this fatal Expedition; they are not censured for *declining*, they are blamed for *accepting* of command, or not sufficiently remonstrating against a plan they did not approve; yet they *made their objections*, they *stated their doubts*, and *then submitted to their orders*, as became them: it is a delicate thing for Officers *to remonstrate too strongly against services they are ordered upon!*

But amidst all our author's lamentations on the military state of this country, does he think he shall mend it by making desperate, and thrusting out of the service, men, who on his own principles, I think, have no blame, but that of not having judged *practicable* a thing he thought so, or perhaps not judged it practicable *in the particular mode he most approved*. He does not seem to think they want spirit; he does not quite arraign their capacity; and sure the idea of their treachery is too ridiculous to deserve a second mention; men, as he himself says (and his is an honourable testimony) who
will

will be acquitted of personal cowardice by whoever is acquainted with their characters; who have served with spirit and gallantry, and who lately stood among the first for rank and reputation.



P O S T S C R I P T.

I MUST add one observation, which I omitted, on the several quotations made, from the *Enquiry*, of words spoke by the General Officers, or answers made by them, before that board; viz. That those answers were not accurately taken down, as was observed by many who were present; were not regularly read over when taken; and are scarce ever in the words they were spoke; which is very material, when words are so critically weighed and so invidiously commented upon. I must at the same time do the Judge Advocate the justice to say, I believe it did not proceed from the least want of candor in him; and that it was quite otherwise at the Court Martial, where he also officiated, and where every thing seemed to be taken down with the utmost exactness.

F I N I S.